

STATE

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February 2017

MAGAZINE

Seeds for Change

Alumni find solutions
to local challenges

Ending AIDS

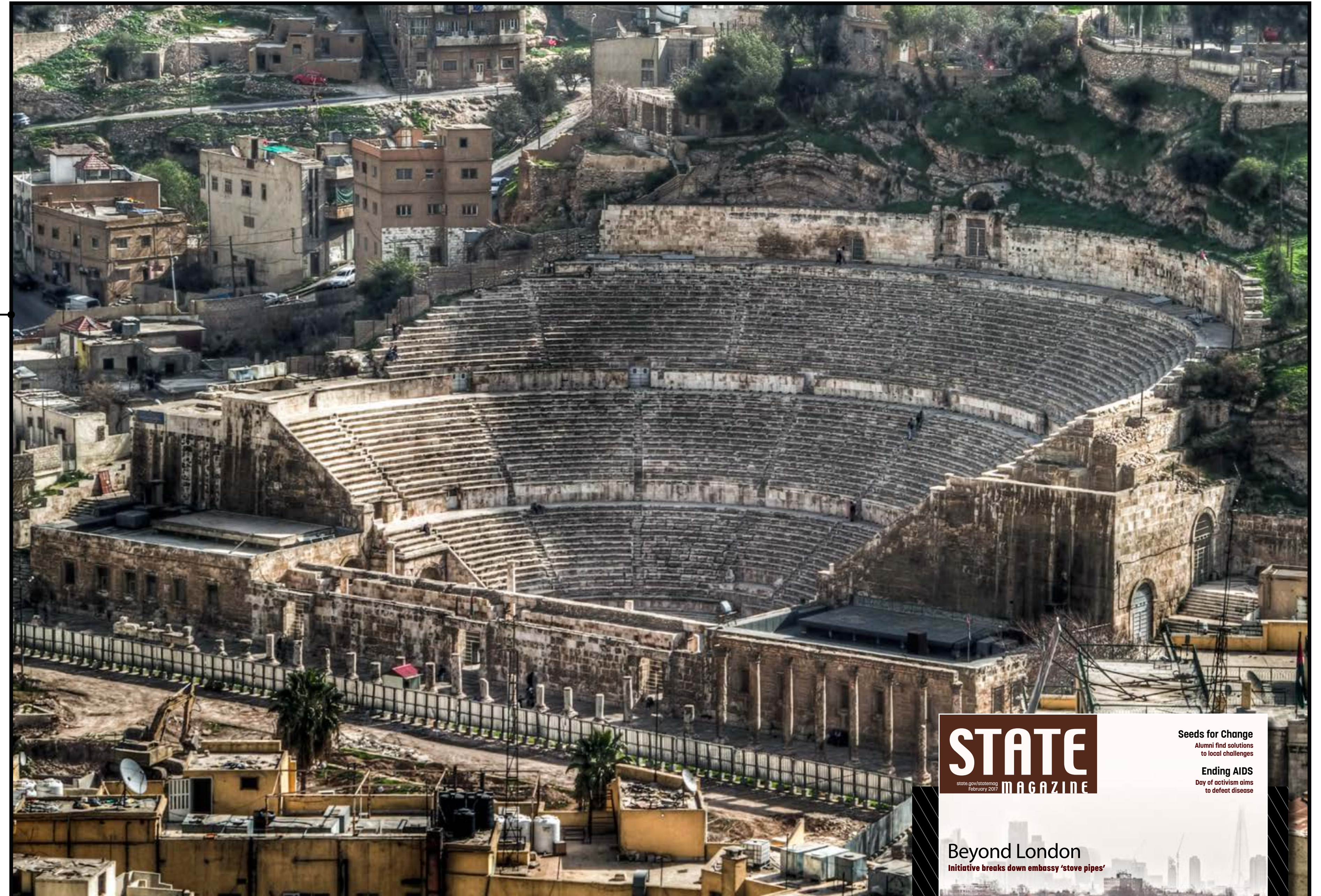
Day of activism aims
to defeat disease

Beyond London

Initiative breaks down embassy 'stove pipes'



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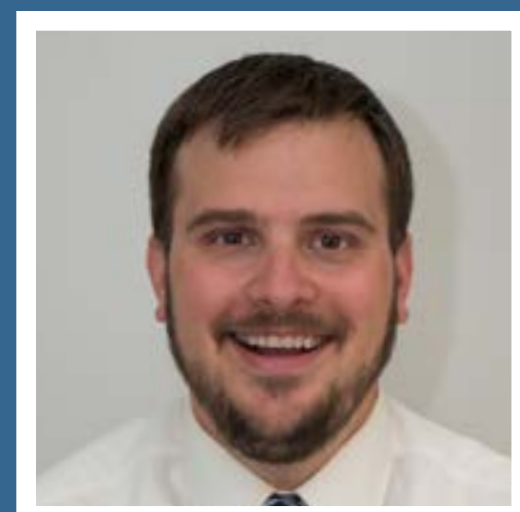
Amman's Roman Theatre is a 6,000-seat, 2nd-century Roman theatre. A famous landmark in the Jordanian capital, it dates back to the Roman period when the city was known as Philadelphia.

Photo by Ronald Woan



On the cover

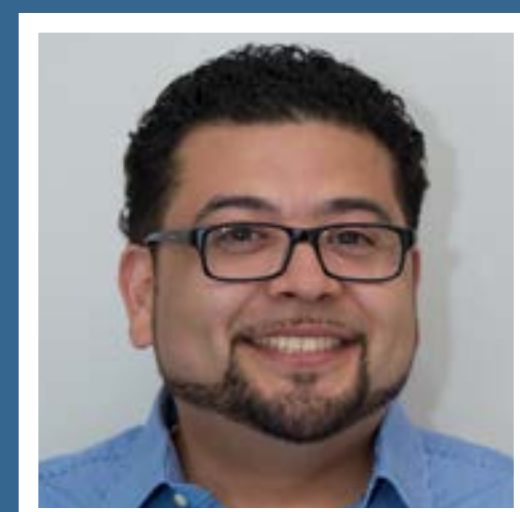
Fog settles over London on a winter day.
Photo by Davide D'Amico



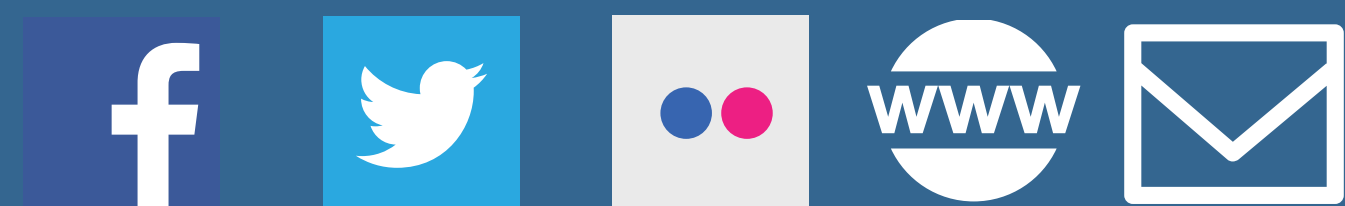
Isaac D. Pacheco
Editor-in-Chief
pachecoi2@state.gov



Ed Warner
Deputy Editor
warneres@state.gov



Luis A. Jimenez, Jr.
Art Director
jimenezla@state.gov



State Magazine

For details on submitting articles to *State Magazine*, request guidelines by email at statemagazine@state.gov or download them from state.gov/statemag.

2401 E Street NW, Room H232

Washington DC 20037

statemagazine@state.gov

State Magazine does not purchase freelance material.

Deadlines

The submission deadline for the **April issue is February 20.**

The deadline for the **May issue is March 20.**

State Magazine is published monthly, except bimonthly in July and August, by the Bureau of Human Resources at the U.S. Department of State. It is intended for information only and is not authority for official action. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of State. The editorial team reserves the right to select and edit all materials for publication.

Editorial Contributions

Unsolicited artwork and manuscripts are not accepted, and publisher assumes no responsibility for return or safety of unsolicited artwork, photographs, or manuscripts. Query letters may be addressed to the deputy editor or statemagazine@state.gov

STATE

MAGAZINE



At the Greater China OMS Workshop, participants gather in front of "Pin River Yangtze," a sculpture by Maya Lin constructed of 3,000 stainless steel pins.

Photo by Andre O. Anderson

Embassy Beijing Hosts OMS Workshop

The U.S. Embassy in Beijing in October hosted the first Greater China workshop for Office Management Specialists (OMS), an event involving 23 participants from all posts in China, plus the Department's OMS coordinator, Kendl Williams.

The two-day workshop focused on learning, innovation and professional development. Participants shared best practices on such matters as OIG inspection preparation, EER writing and records management, and met senior leadership to discuss proactive bidding and effective performance strategies. The workshop also let the specialists communicate fresh perspectives and varying viewpoints on their roles and seek feedback from post leadership. Participants requested increased section-specific training opportunities to better equip them to contribute to section, mission and U.S. government goals.

The workshop led to a reporting cable that shared best practices with the OMS community. The workshop also led to creation of a professional development e-book club and establishment of a formal OMS mentorship program in Greater China. It also strengthened participants' working relationships across the region, increased networking and professional development opportunities and marks a long-term investment in OMS performance. Organizers hope to make the gathering an annual event. ■



Among the works of art exhibited was a painting by Ely Manel Fall. Called "Tristezza," the image depicts a female immigrant who has neither documents nor a job.

Photo by Nina Eaton

Rome Tri-Mission Aids Refugees

On Nov. 4, the U.S. Tri-Mission in Rome partnered with the Joel Nafuma Refugee Center (JNRC) for their first refugee art event, titled "From Conflict to Contact: Refugee Art Bridging the Gap." Kelly Degnan, U.S. Embassy Rome's deputy chief of mission, opened the monthlong exhibit in the Tri-Mission Art Gallery. Speaking to more than 100 guests, she conveyed the importance of art for expressing hopes, dreams, experiences and communicating messages that help refugees and migrants recover.

In 2016, more than 160,000 people risked their lives to reach Italy, many fleeing violence in their homelands.

The [JNRC](#), located in a church basement in central Rome, is a day center that welcomes up to 250 refugees and migrants a day, offering toiletries, psychological assistance, and language, computer and art therapy classes. The art [class](#) aims "to help to reduce anxiety and create a safe space to instill a sense of calm," JNRC Art Counselor Helen Creswell said.

The art event was one of many collaborations of Tri-Mission Rome, which includes the U.S. Embassies to Italy and the Holy See, and the U.S. Mission to the U.N. agencies in Rome. Civil society organizations and the Italian government work to help integrate migrants and second-generation residents into their communities. Other mission projects include supporting language and job skills training courses, offering access to services based on mobile technology and providing digital storytelling campaigns and U.S. expert speakers. ■



Secretary of State Kerry lets children pet his dog Ben at the Home for the Holidays reception.
Photo by Michael Gross

Holiday Event Salutes Unaccompanied Tour Families

In December, then-Secretary of State John Kerry and his wife, Teresa Heinz Kerry, hosted the eighth annual Diplomacy at Home for the Holidays event in the Diplomatic Reception Rooms at the State Department, honoring the dedication and sacrifice of U.S. government employees and families who endure long periods of separation due to assignments at hardship posts.

Like the first such event, in 2009, the celebration was geared toward children, offering activities, performances and gifts. They decorated a keepsake box to fill with special mementos to share with their parents and a jar filled with chocolates. After posing with Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer in the digital photo booth, they could then immediately email the photos to their family member serving at an unaccompanied post.

Entertainment was provided by the Carol Ringers Bell Choir and a military jazz quartet. Secretary Kerry told attendees that “representing America abroad is what the State Department is all about. And it’s more than just a job; it’s a calling. And everybody here is a member of a family. We’re all part of the same family.”

He then introduced the “wicked awesome” cast of the Broadway hit “Wicked,” which performed the songs “The Wizard and I,” “For Good” and “Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire.”

At the close, Secretary Kerry mingled and posed for photos, and the children went home with large world globes and gift bags full of items donated by event sponsors. ■



Secretary Kerry and IIP Coordinator Macon Phillips, right, cut the ribbon to open IIP's renovated office space Nov. 30.

State Department photo

Secretary Opens Renovated IIP Office

Secretary of State John Kerry opened the Bureau of International Information Programs' modernized workspace in November. The space offers Wi-Fi and supports mobile devices and new communication software to promote connectivity across the bureau.

The ribbon-cutting capped an effort that began in May 2014 to improve the space and update IIP's tools and technologies. At the event, Secretary Kerry praised the modernized workspace and thanked attendees for their ongoing work. He said the bureau is "part of the critical vanguard in the transformation of the ... Department and diplomacy."

Secretary Kerry also toured the renovated space and heard from staff about the bureau's work, including how new analytics tools help IIP track social media outreach and how communications tools like Slack are used to coordinate teams across offices and continents. IIP also uses Google Drive and Google Docs for document sharing and collaboration.

In the renovation, IIP went from 150 cubicles to a completely open plan environment with 152 sit/stand desks. The number of conference rooms grew from three to 16, and six new collaborative areas were created for employees and visitors to gather and work away from their desks.

"The future of diplomacy is less about rigid hierarchy and more about openness, information sharing and collaboration," said Coordinator for IIP Macon Phillips. Through the modernization of its space and tools, and "the attitude and culture that guides how we work," IIP is preparing itself for the future, he said. ■

Direct from the D.G.

ARNOLD CHACON
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE



Spotlighting Our Talented OMS Corps

In January we launched a new podcast series, “DG Spotlight.” It’s a look at the people and work of the Department of State. Like the “Conversations on Leadership” podcast series, “DG Spotlight” also follows a conversation format. But it’s more of a deep dive into the different career tracks, opportunities for professional growth and substantive work our people are doing every day in every corner of the globe.

The new podcast’s first episode is part of a mini-series featuring our Office Management Specialists (OMS). Our OMSs, overseas and in Washington, are critical to the Department’s successful operations, but oftentimes their work is not well understood. As we continue reform efforts to strengthen our OMS corps, we hope the podcast series will empower OMS’s and managers with ideas on everything from resource management and knowledge management to leadership and life-long learning.

Last year, I directed my HR team to take a hard look at the skills and competencies our OMSs will need to succeed in the future, given their evolving roles and continuing changes in technology. Our 2016 survey resonated with our community, as evidenced by the high response rate provided by both OMSs and their supervisors.

The survey found that the future OMS is a “technology enabler,” a specialist who can help educate others to be more effective. Both OMSs and supervisors believe OMSs should:

- play a larger role in computer operations and technology management;
- assume staff assistant roles; and
- serve as project/process managers, information/records managers and office managers.

We’re using the survey’s results to explore expanding the duties and grades of OMSs, determine their future needs, update the OMS Professional Development Plan and validate hiring processes. Already, our OMS reform efforts have led to a number of changes. These include shortening the time-in-class requirement for administrative promotion from 18 months to 12 months; upgrading 11 positions to the FP-04 level and nine positions to the FP-05 level, and creating two new FP-03 recruiter/assessor positions dedicated to OMS recruitment.

The survey’s input has been invaluable, and we welcome continued engagement. Through programs like the DG Spotlight podcasts, we aim to provide best practices that can be emulated throughout the Department and highlight the different ways our OMS corps make a difference in improving, defending and advancing our country’s interests and values.

To offer ideas or comments on our OMS reform efforts, email OMS Coordinator, Kendl Williams, at williamsk2@state.gov. ■

Arnold A. Chacon

Conflict Matters

BY SHIREEN DODSON, DIRECTOR,
OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN



Dealing with Change and Conflict

Change and conflict are inseparable. In change, we face conflict. In conflict, we seek change. Department of State employees work tirelessly around the globe to sustain a peaceful, prosperous, just and democratic world. The work of our diplomatic missions embraces people everywhere, fostering connections and building relationships. We must walk the talk; these same ideals must be part of our workspaces. To be effective abroad, we must lead by example in our own agency.

As we see turmoil abroad and approach it with our best and brightest efforts, we must also focus inward, facing our daily challenges with the same level of engagement, civility and energy. Challenges to even our strongest relationships are inevitable during change, especially when collaborating during long hours or working through significant levels of instability. We cannot refuse to engage with these challenges. We cannot turn from them, hoping they will subside on their own. We must approach these conflicts with our most aware and sincere selves. Approaching conflict and engaging effectively means fostering constructive dialogue, improving transparency, upholding fair practices, building our self-awareness and exercising civility in the face of our most difficult conflicts. Just as America is the leader in global collaboration, we must reflect collaboration among one another in the office.

Everyone at every level in the Department is responsible for demonstrating these conflict competencies. During change, however, it can be especially difficult to follow these ideals. I invite you to join me in proactive management of the conflicts within our offices. Doing so can celebrate difference, nurture creative environments, generate healthy competition to promote innovative ideas and allow us to continue working toward our mission quickly and effectively. I encourage you to find resiliency in coming together as a Department.

And in our same spirit of community, you are not required to go it alone. In fact, I urge you to utilize the resources available to manage conflict. The Office of the Ombudsman should be your first phone call in such instances. As a completely confidential, zero-barrier resource, the officer is there to help you navigate your way through your conflict and get you where you want to be. ■

INR Watch

Office's staff are intelligence gatekeepers

By Damon Kitterman, officer, INR Watch

FSOs who serve as officers on the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) Watch are the Department's first-responders regarding urgent intelligence issues. They are, as described by Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research Dan Smith, "intelligence gatekeepers for the Department, working to inform State Department principals about late-breaking intelligence on current events and priority policy issues."

INR is at the nexus of foreign policy and intelligence, and its Civil Service and Foreign Service staff get to see how intelligence is used at the highest levels of the government. Using intelligence policy coordination and analytic outreach, INR ensures strong coordination between the Department and intelligence community (IC), which lauds INR's accuracy and perceptiveness.

The INR Watch provides the bureau with around-the-clock coverage and is the Department's central point of contact with the IC, with whose agencies Watch officers frequently exchange information. For example, INR Watch Officer Jasmine White recalled having been asked to brief an IC agency analyst about a tense overseas situation involving an American citizen. "Having broad access to sensitive intelligence, I was able to provide timely updates," she said.

An INR Watch officer may even be called upon to brief critical intelligence to Department principals, if the call comes after the Department's usual working hours. "INR Watch routinely takes the lead in passing classified information to the secretary when he is traveling," observed officer Alisande



Members of the INR Watch gather for a group portrait.

State Department Photo

Pipkin. She has offered verbal briefings to the secretary's staff, to ready the secretary for an imminent meeting with a world leader.

The chief of the INR Watch is its Current Intelligence Officer (CIO), Korey McLeod. McLeod's mission is to assess and summarize the most important overnight intelligence for Department principals. McLeod also distributes materials for interagency meetings, helping senior Department analysts and policymakers prepare Department principals for NSC meetings.

At the INR Watch, the officer on duty sorts hundreds of pieces of incoming intelligence, alerting INR | *Cont.* | ▼



INR Watch Director Matt Murray oversees the office's support of Department principals, policymakers and analysts. *State Department Photo*

analysts and principals on unfolding events. The officer also briefs the Operations Center's senior watch officer on breaking intelligence, and provides intelligence support to special task forces established during crises. Last summer, for instance, INR Watch officers supported task forces on the coup attempt in Turkey and political unrest in South Sudan. The INR Watch also has a close relationship with the Bureau

of Diplomatic Security Command Center and immediately passes to it information on threats to overseas facilities, personnel or American citizens.

The INR Watch also produces the Night Owl Notes, a one-page summary of select overnight intelligence items that is sent to the secretary, seventh-floor principals, the White House Situation Room and elsewhere in the IC.

Service on the INR Watch involves shift work—working nights, weekends and holidays—but this makes the INR Watch more of a team effort, with officers helping each other and appreciating the team's esprit de corps. (To promote work-life balance, shifts are scheduled weeks in advance.) Personally, I've found that, although the watch officers do work some nights and weekends, the schedule leaves me time during the week to attend school events or spend time with my children.

The INR Watch also offers training opportunities, with officers devoting time to FSI leadership training, language training at other institutions and the ability to learn at INR analyst exchanges and Department seminars. Additionally, the INR Watch engages in regular outreach exchanges with other



INR Watch team members, from left, Rob Cavese, Mary Swartz, Korey McLeod and Chad Miner stand ready to meet any situation at all hours of the day and night. *State Department Photo*

members of the IC, developing relationships and ideas for improved collaboration. INR Watch officers also regularly engage in crisis management and emergency preparedness exercises.

Serving on the INR Watch enriches any Civil Service or Foreign Service career. One such officer, Thad Ross, said he enjoys “the autonomy and trust given to INR Watch officers. We have to be well-informed about world events at all times, allowing officers to identify important pieces of intelligence for decision-makers, immediately affecting foreign policy.”



The author poses in front of the White House after a liaison visit to the White House Situation Room. *State Department Photo*

Adopt an Embassy

Mission connects with Texas students

By Thao Anh Tran, rotational political/consular officer, U.S. Embassy in Panama City



When Director General Arnold Chacon suggested to Ambassador John Feeley that he find a way for Mission Panama to recruit and develop FSOs, the mission in 2016 created its Adopt a U.S. Embassy Program (AUEP), in which the post's first- and second-tour (FAST) officers do outreach to high school students in the United States.

Since May, officers and Locally Employed staff from Mission Panama have spoken at monthly videoconference sessions with a group of a dozen high school students and their program coordinator at the Global Studies Academy (GSA) in the Houston, Texas, area. Through Google Hangout and Skype, the featured speakers tell the students of their diverse socioeconomic and educational backgrounds, and the paths that led them to a career in diplomacy. The students learn about FSOs' work and gain familiarity | *Cont.* | ▼

Opening Spread: On December 1, 2016, as part of the Adopt a U.S. Embassy Program, Ambassador John D. Feeley of the U.S. Embassy in Panama participated in a Skype videoconference with high school students from four school campuses in Houston to discuss U.S.-Panama bilateral relations and to encourage the students to pursue a diplomatic career in the U.S. Foreign Service..

Photo by Miguel Moreno

with the interagency environment at a U.S. Embassy, since the speakers come from many mission agencies, such as the Federal Aviation Administration. Discussions have occurred on such topics as immigration, trade, regional security and using public diplomacy to promote U.S. culture and values.

The relationship has given the students a deeper understanding of U.S. foreign policy and interests abroad; the diverse corps of speakers has convinced the students that, regardless of their family backgrounds, they have much to contribute, should they seek to join the Foreign Service. From the start, students learned of the Department's commitment to recruiting employees with wide-ranging talents to ensure that the Foreign Service reflects our country's diversity. Thus, one student said the program helped him "realize the vast range of tasks the U.S. Department of State conducts, other than political representation and diplomacy around the world." He added that the AUEP has let him meet many FSOs online and learn of their "exciting careers, from international law to engineering, that I never knew would be [part of] working with the State Department."

The students were so focused that, on learning about the FS oral assessment as part of the recruitment process, they conducted a simulation with their classmates, using what they learned about the Panama Canal and U.S.-Panama bilateral trade relations. A Student participant said the experience went well, and "it was fun to see the students in groups debating each option and learning about the economic, political and social decisions that went into expanding the Panama Canal."

At the end of a recent semester-long engagement, more than 400 student participants from different campuses of the GSA met Ambassador Feeley via teleconference to share what they had learned and discuss foreign policy issues on Embassy Panama City's agenda. As part of a school district with more than 24,000 high school students, they were impressed with how U.S. foreign policies shape domestic issues affecting their lives in Texas. Another student, said the AUEP is "a phenomenal program that has given me a hands-on experience of what Foreign Service Officers do on a daily basis."

The program "has truly cemented my desire to pursue a career in foreign policy," he added.

The mission participants in the program, its entry- and midlevel officers and LE staff, have also benefited from participating as speakers, noting it boosted their public speaking skills and helped them communicate with fellow citizens who may become U.S. diplomats. Public Affairs Officer Paco Perez said, "I love explaining the Foreign Service to students who have big dreams for their future careers." He described the students as diverse and talented, and said they "asked all the right questions and are surely committed to taking the test and trying their best to join the Foreign Service."

Programs like the AUEP can put U.S. high school students in contact with officers and specialists at posts abroad. Those interested in implementing a similar program can contact Diplomat in Residence Coordinator Josh Glazeroff via [email](#) to be paired with an interested high school. It also helps if your post first gets front office leadership's support for the plan, delegates program management and implementation to the post's FAST officers and uses the post's midlevel officers and specialists and agency representatives as speakers. Another tip: Encourage students to share their knowledge with other peers who might not be able to participate. ■

Beyond London

Initiative breaks down embassy 'stove pipes'

By San Reddy, cultural assistant, U.S. Embassy London

The practice known as “stove piping,” where each of an organization’s units operates separately from the others, is the bane of smooth, efficient operations, but that is changing, and the U.S. Embassy in London’s Beyond London initiative is leading the charge. Launched in 2014 to support former Ambassador Matthew Barzun’s regional outreach program, the initiative helps break down stove pipe divisions within the 1,000-person embassy by encouraging staff from different sections and agencies to work more effectively together and expand their reach beyond traditional contacts.

Eighty-seven percent of United Kingdom (U.K.) residents live outside London, 78 percent of the U.K.’s gross domestic product is generated outside London and 91 percent | *Cont.* | ▼



Previous photo: Former Ambassador Matthew Barzun speaks to students at Lincoln Cathedral in the English East Midlands.

Photo by Beyond London's Lincoln Team

of members of Parliament represent constituencies outside London. Thus, the program achieves the ambassador's aim of reaching beyond the capital to understand the nation's political, social and economic nuances.

"Most people probably think that a large part of our jobs involves local travel, but in fact, for many diplomats the pressure of business keeps us in the capital, interacting with our government counterparts," said Kelly Adams-Smith, the post's former economic counselor, who played a key role in the 2014 launch. "Having a program like Beyond London encourages us to get out and makes it a regular part of our jobs."

The Beyond London program was designed to be sustainable, representative and supportive of wider mission goals. It involves teams of three, each composed of volunteer American and Locally Employed staff, ideally those with personal links to the region served by the team. The teams cover the more than 20 regions that make up England and Wales, while U.S. Consulate teams do outreach to the citizens of Northern Ireland and Scotland. Although teams visit their assigned regions at least twice a year, they continuously expand their regional knowledge and contacts throughout the year.

"One shining example of breaking down stove pipes was when a Beyond London team member discovered a young entrepreneur during an outreach trip and nominated him to attend the Global Entrepreneur Summit Exchange,"



Members of the Beyond London Team visit the Portsmouth Boat Building College.

Embassy London photo

said Anneliese Reinemeyer, the cultural affairs officer. The entrepreneur was then able to secure funding from a major U.S. company to convert its U.K. car fleet to electric vehicles. The action was a blow to stove pipping because the nominating officer was from the general services office and had never nominated anyone for a PD exchange program before.

Another example, she said, involved Team Liverpool's connecting of a visiting U.S. Navy ship with a local school in Liverpool, "allowing the Navy to add a community-outreach component during their time in port that would otherwise have been missed."

John Morgan, chief of the Passport and Citizenship Unit and a member of the Nottingham/Lincoln team, also | *Cont.* | ▼ | 2 of 4 |

credits the breakdown of stove pipes for the success of his team's activities.

He noted that, in the age of emailing and instant messaging, face-to-face contact sometimes falls by the wayside. "We made a concerted effort to sit down as a group to brainstorm ideas and divide up the workload," he said. "We all have specific strengths—logistics, networking, contract work and developing briefing materials for the ambassador. We, naturally, ceded tasks to team members in areas they excelled at. This made for a strong team and successful regional outreach."

He added that, by working with general services, public affairs and Department of Commerce colleagues, he's gained "personal connections that I have leveraged over and over again to solve problems I have faced."

Although members of the Bournemouth team were unable to meet face-to-face often, due to work pressures and logistics, this did not impact its effectiveness.

"We harnessed technology to connect on a daily basis to consolidate our schedule. This kept us on track on our overall goals and ongoing progress," said Mahvash Siddiqui, an environment, science, technology and health (ESTH) officer and a key member of the Bournemouth team.

She lauded Bournemouth as a pace-setting technology hub city having high-speed Wi-Fi and the offices of JP Morgan, financial consulting firms and tech startups, companies that benefit from fast Web connectivity.

"By eliminating stove piping, my colleagues on the team tapped into my ESTH expertise while I benefitted enormously from their insights and competencies on homeland security and consular issues," Siddiqui explained. "In this way, we successfully targeted stakeholders to discuss issues such as tech startups, airport development and relevant student visa issues in our outreach engagement." | *Cont.* | ▼

Fog dissipates on a cool autumn day in London.

Photo by Mariusz Kluzniak



The outreach to new contacts has helped the embassy increase by 1,000 percent the number of its nominations for the International Visitor Leadership Program over its 2015 level. The embassy has also saved tens of thousands of dollars in energy costs after the embassy replaced all light bulbs in its residences with a model suggested by Team Oxford.

Beyond London also provides professional development opportunities for staff, particularly administrative staff members who rarely get to engage with the public. “Our teams purposely include people who do not normally work together, such as tech specialists, OMSs and RSOs, showing everyone that public outreach is everyone’s business, not just the role of public diplomacy officers,” Adams-Smith observed.

As part of the program, Ambassador Barzun personally briefs and coaches staff on how to conduct useful workshops. Team members are trained on a range of cross-sectional initiatives, broadening their understanding of wider mission



Members of the Beyond London team from Bournemouth pose for a photo during their visit to Bournemouth University’s Digital Media Lab.

Photo by Beyond London’s Bournemouth Team

goals. The teams often engage in regional reporting as well, boosting writing skills and helping the mission cover regions from a political and economic perspective.

Based on stakeholders’ comments, participants say they’ve increased by 95 percent their regional knowledge, due to their visits, and increased their satisfaction with the outreach by 93 percent.

The initiative has also expanded the embassy’s educational outreach to regional high school-age students via workshops on such topics as the U.S.-U.K. relationship and U.S. foreign policy priorities. Visits by mission staff—25 of them involving the ambassador—have so far reached more than 5,000 students who normally have limited opportunities to talk to embassy staff, Reinemeyer said. Each Beyond London team can engage with classes of high school-age students, often on such topics as gender issues and the advancement of women and girls. “Conducting the talks with local staff, as equals, is empowering for the local staff and builds all of our public speaking skills,” said Adams-Smith.

Beyond London also extends the embassy’s reach on its strategic messages, such as emphasizing the importance of the U.S.-U.K. relationship. By gaining regional press coverage, that message goes out to thousands of U.K. citizens in less frequently visited regions of the country.

Yet, even in the capital, the nation’s media are also impressed. The Times of London has written that, “It is sobering when a United States ambassador knows Britain better than the British.” The newspaper said Ambassador Barzun “has grasped the guiding principle of modern diplomacy: that it must shift out of capitals, into the media and, in the case of Britain, into the curry houses of West Yorkshire ...” ■

Ending AIDS



Day of activism aims to defeat disease

By Ambassador Deborah L. Birx, M.D., U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and Special Representative for Health Diplomacy

Around the globe, World AIDS Day, each Dec. 1, is a time to celebrate the millions of lives that have been saved and the courageous individuals who have brought hope and healing to those living affected by this disease in the 35 years since the AIDS epidemic began.

Having been engaged in the AIDS response since its earliest days as an immunologist and physician at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, I know firsthand that the devastation and despair in the epidemic's wake was crippling. Hundreds and then thousands of men and women diagnosed with HIV were dying, often in the prime | *Cont.* | ▼

of their lives. Those of us who were trained to be healers had little more than compassion to offer our patients. Nevertheless, many of these brave individuals, who knew they had little time left to live, stood up and fought for their friends and colleagues in ways that still drive and inspire me today. Over the ensuing decades, thanks to a combination of scientific advances, political leadership and community activism, the epidemic began to recede in the United States.

Fifteen years ago, reports from the front lines of the epidemic, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, were dire. Entire families and communities were falling ill to HIV, with disastrous social and economic consequences. Gains in global health and development were being lost in the hardest hit regions of sub-Saharan Africa: Infant mortality doubled, child mortality tripled and life expectancy dropped by 20 years or more. Congress authorized President George W. Bush's launch of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) just four months after its 2003 announcement, and that unprecedented investment began to turn the tide in sub-Saharan Africa.

I was privileged to lead this year's World AIDS Day, which released clear evidence that the epidemic is becoming controlled in

older adults and babies in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Across these three countries, new HIV infections have declined by between 51 and 76 percent since PEPFAR began. These countries are approaching a point where HIV transmission could effectively be controlled. If we continue to focus and accelerate our efforts, PEPFAR is poised | *Cont.* | ▼



Staff and beneficiaries of a PEPFAR-supported health center in Maputo greet Ambassador to Mozambique Dean Pittman on his World AIDS Day visit to the center.

State Department photo



Global AIDS Coordinator Ambassador Deborah Birx, second from right, second row, and Ambassador for Global Women's Issues Catherine Russell, second from right, fourth row, participate in a World AIDS Day event at the U.S. Embassy in Lilongwe. The post used the occasion to celebrate its partnerships with organizations working with adolescent girls and young women to keep them AIDS-free and examined the help being offered to this vulnerable population.

Photo by Margaret Phiri



Botswana's president, Ian Khama, delivers the official address at the national 2016 World AIDS Day ceremony.
State Department photo

to help control the epidemic in 10 additional African countries over the next four years and reduce the out-year costs required to sustain the HIV/AIDS response.

PEPFAR is now supporting the provision of lifesaving antiretroviral treatment (ART) to nearly 11.5 million men, women and children worldwide. This is 50 percent more than in 2014, and a 230-fold increase from the fewer

than 50,000 people who were on treatment in sub-Saharan Africa when PEPFAR was launched. In addition, nearly 2 million infant HIV infections have been averted cumulatively since the beginning of PEPFAR, with nearly half of that progress occurring since 2013.

However, our work is far from done.

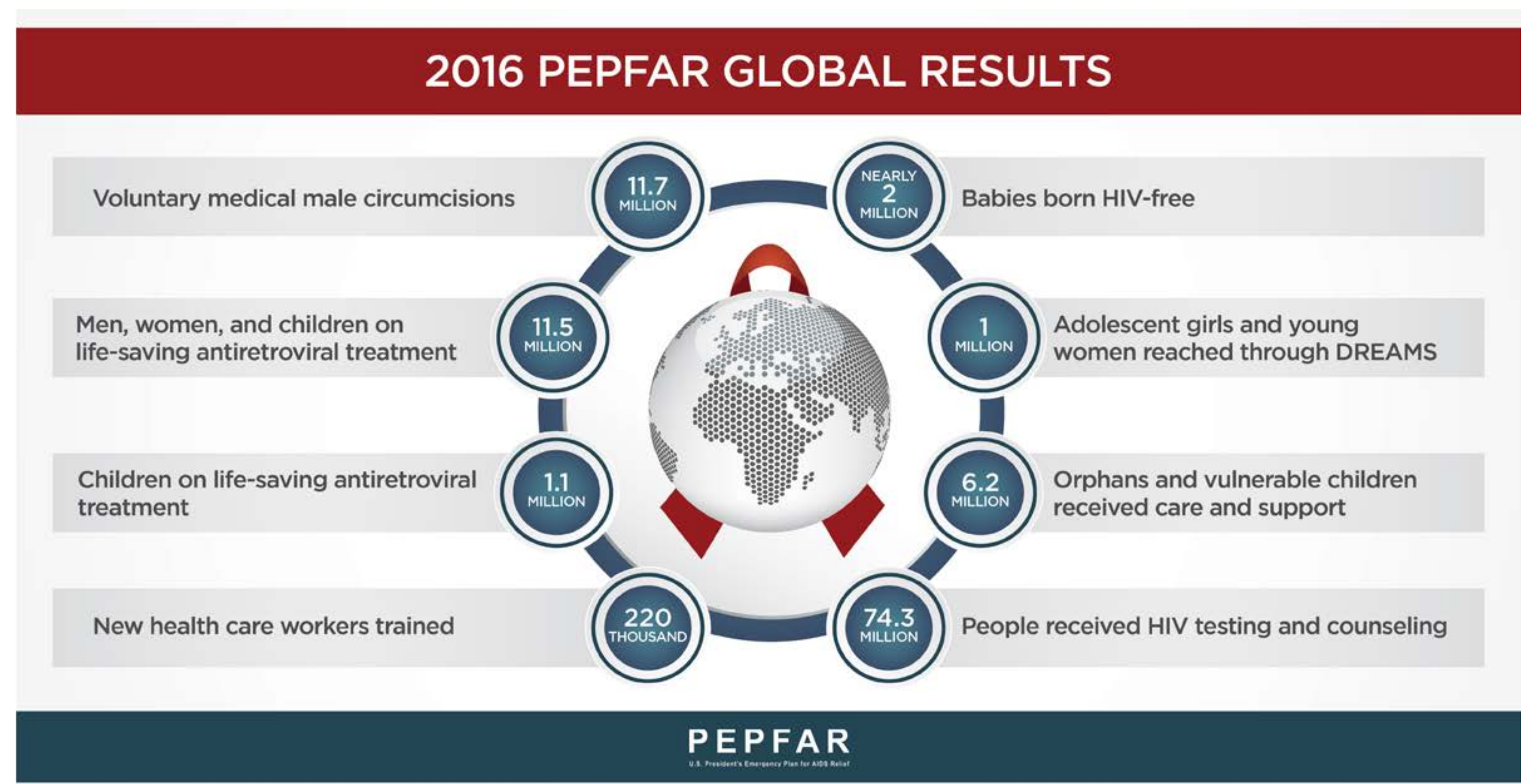
Under the Department's leadership, PEPFAR is now the largest commitment in history made by any nation to combat a single disease. Since inception, PEPFAR has received strong bipartisan support and has been reauthorized twice by significant bipartisan congressional majorities. The program is recognized widely for efficiently and effectively investing U.S. taxpayer dollars to dramatically increase program results and impact in a budget-neutral environment.

A major factor in PEPFAR's success is the commitment, passion and innovation of U.S. government colleagues worldwide. Under the leadership of our chiefs of mission, PEPFAR has saved and improved the lives of millions

of men, women and children living affected by HIV/AIDS. Thus, dozens of U.S. diplomatic posts commemorated World AIDS Day 2016 with significant events and innovative uses of social media.

For instance, at the U.S. Mission in South Africa, Ambassador Patrick Gaspard hosted an audience of hundreds of young South African women on Dec. 3 to highlight a PEPFAR-led public-private partnership that aims to ensure that every girl can grow up Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored and Safe (DREAMS). The DREAMS in Motion campaign brought new and innovative outreach to one of South Africa's most vulnerable populations, women and girls. The event featured TV celebrity Oprah Winfrey and was covered by such outlets as South Africa's 24-hour news station and the national broadcaster. The story was covered in major national publications. On social media, #BigDREAMS trended number two in South Africa on the afternoon of the event.

Meanwhile in Botswana on Dec. 1, Ambassador Earl Miller participated in the nation's World AIDS Day commemoration, | *Cont.* | ▼



together with government officials, diplomats and civil society stakeholders. President Ian Khama spoke of his country's successes and the nationwide launch, in June 2016, of a policy allowing all individuals who test positive for HIV to be immediately offered lifesaving antiretroviral treatment. The U.S. Mission staffed a booth that distributed information about U.S. government programs to combat the epidemic, and two national newspapers published Ambassador Miller's World AIDS Day op-ed article, which emphasized Botswana's new Treat All policy, U.S. contributions to the HIV/AIDS response and 12 PEPFAR heroes who work for a healthy future for Botswana youth.

In Mozambique on World AIDS Day, Ambassador Dean Pittman delivered remarks at an event at a PEPFAR-supported health center in Maputo. The center is one of several hundred facilities across the country receiving U.S. support for HIV prevention, treatment and care services. The embassy also launched a social media campaign that shares the photos and stories of people living with HIV to help fight stigma and discrimination.

World AIDS Day 2016 showed how far we have come toward achieving an AIDS-free generation, but the journey is not yet complete. The promise of controlling and, ultimately, ending the epidemic is within our reach.

What once seemed impossible is now possible. Once again, the United States is rising to the challenge and leading the way. ■



On World AIDS Day, Oprah Winfrey and Ambassador to South Africa Patrick Gaspard discuss the PEPFAR-led DREAMS partnership in South Africa.
State Department photo

Leadership Day

Event encourages leadership at all levels

By Marja Verloop, chair, Leadership Day, and Lauren Lovelace, member, iLead Steering Committee

PREVIOUS PHOTO: U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry delivers remarks at the U.S. Department of State's inaugural Leadership Day, at the Department in Washington, D.C., on December 13, 2016. *State Department photo*

Secretary of State John Kerry took the stage in support of the Department's inaugural Leadership Day, Dec. 13. He told attendees to embrace a culture of leadership and learning at all levels, saying "Now is the time to invest in our leaders and, by doing so, advance our interests and uphold the values that for more than 200 years have defined our country and that continue today to inspire the world."

Hundreds of Department employees attended the event, which occurred in the Dean Acheson Auditorium and at the iLead Expo in the Exhibit Hall, and was broadcast via BNet. The event was organized by iLead, a voluntary network of individuals that champions leadership development and seeks to strengthen leadership skills and practices throughout the Department.

Leadership Day was designed to spur conversation on leadership, adopt best practices and inspire leadership activities throughout the Department. The program underscored the Department's 10 Leadership and Management Principles (LMP) and featured a panel discussion involving senior leadership. There were also a series of short "Ignite" talks by employees from a variety of backgrounds and an expo highlighting leadership-related activities and resources offered by a range of Department offices.

iLead evolved from the Culture of Leadership Roundtable, an initiative spearheaded in 2014 by AFSA President Ambassador Barbara Stephenson and U.S. Ambassador to Nepal Alaina Teplitz. The roundtable sought to incorporate the 10 LMPs into training, professional development, performance management and recruitment, and laid the foundation for the growing acceptance and visibility of the leadership principles. The current iLead team, led by Carmen Cantor, Michael Murphy and Julie Schechter-Torres, seeks



Members of the iLead team include, from left, David Fisher, Aaron Martz, Elizabeth Norris, Amanda Hickman, Jaspreet Gill, Tim Teas, Marja Verloop, Joe Domask, Mary Bati, J.P. Patterson and Lauren Lovelace.

Photo by Daniel Gaush

to catalyze and grow a culture of leadership at all levels throughout the Department. Secretary Kerry reinforced that goal in his remarks, saying "I am absolutely certain that building a strong culture of leadership is critical to the success of our foreign policy."

The participation of Secretary Kerry and other senior officials in Leadership Day activities raised awareness of the importance of leadership Department-wide. In addition, iLead has worked closely with FSI's Leadership and Management School and other partners to develop Leadership 2 Go, a toolkit of leadership articles, activities, and easy, accessible, ready-to-use materials to foster dialogue around the 10 LMPs. Leadership 2 Go can be applied no matter where an employee is located or what his or her job is. The Leadership 2 Go kits were among the resources and best practices shown at the leadership expo in the Exhibit Hall.

Among the more than 25 offices that partnered with iLead on Leadership Day were FSI, which offered coaching

| *Cont.* | ▼

| 2 of 3 |



Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs Michele Bond and Assistant Secretary for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs William Brownfield speak about leadership practices on a panel. *Photo by Daniel Gaush*

sessions, and the Office of the Ombudsman, which shared guidance on conflict competency. The Bureaus of Consular Affairs (CA) and International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) also sent representatives, who highlighted their bureaus' leadership best practices, and those

who blog on leadership, such as Ron Holloway of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, signed up new readers. Event participants were encouraged to share their leadership styles on an interactive board—where Secretary Kerry posted: “My name is John and iLead by Doing!”

During the senior leadership panel discussion, Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy and the Environment Cathy Novelli urged leaders to inspire, empower and insist.

“You inspire with a vision and what I call stretch goals,” she elaborated. “You empower teams and let them use their creativity. You insist on excellence and live up to it yourself.”

Another speaker, Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Linda Thomas-Greenfield, told of her own leadership principles, saying the foremost is “be kind.” She emphasized the importance of mentorship, noting that when she is in Washington, D.C., she makes an effort to set aside mentoring time on her schedule every day.

Employees at all levels were featured in a series of Ignite talks, sharing examples of how the 10 LMPs can be incorporated into daily practice. Speaking from Kuala Lumpur on the principle “Model Integrity,” Cultural Affairs Specialist Nur Farizan Zulkifli said, “I always like to foster integrity in myself first and

make sure that I adhere to it before I ask my staff to fulfill the same thing ... learning by example is the best.”

Another commenter, Don Jacobson from the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, noted that, as leaders, “we can look at our calendars to know where our priorities lie.” Highlighting FSI’s Leadership Development Continuum, Terry Edwards applauded leaders at every level who “have the humility to know that there’s more to learn.” U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom Matthew Barzun offered an entertaining video that opened with the quip, “if you are like me, when you think of leadership, you immediately think 3 FAM 1214.” He went on to encourage leaders to be decisive, take responsibility and change course when needed.

Director General Arnold Chacon provided the day’s closing remarks. “Today is a reminder that our organization demands leadership excellence and accountability at every level. We owe it to one another to ensure this conversation continues,” he said.

The Department encourages domestic offices and posts overseas to engage in leadership activities. In response to iLead’s cable, for instance, the U.S. Embassy in Prague has already conducted mentoring sessions, featured the LMPs alongside mission goals on portable cards for staff and hosted an off-site planning session with its Czech counterparts. The iLead team welcomes employee feedback and invites everyone to join iLead, share leadership practices and help build the Department’s culture of leadership. Employees can start the process by connecting via email at iLead@state.gov. ■



Civil Service Association President Tommye Grant answers an attendee’s question.

State Department photo

New Leaders

Post promotes gender balance in Czech Republic

By Erin Kotheimer, cultural affairs officer, U.S. Embassy in Prague



Ambassador Andrew Schapiro, center, poses with recipients of the embassy's new Women's Empowerment Grant, as they hold their certificates. *Photo by Thomas Krakora*

Recent statistics from the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report rank the Czech Republic 94th out of 145 countries in the economic participation of women. Women's participation in regional political assemblies and state-level bodies currently hovers around 20 percent.

Violence against women is also an issue in the Czech Republic. According to a recent European Commission poll, 45 percent of respondents in that nation see rape as justified in certain situations; the EU average is 27 percent.

Against this backdrop, the U.S. Embassy in Prague has embarked upon a series of initiatives over the past year to energize the conversation on these issues and help empower women in the Czech Republic. The dialogue seeks solutions for such concerns as gender stereotyping, pay inequity, exclusion from political leadership positions and a lack of child care options. | *Cont.* | ▼



These Roma women who are victims of domestic violence receive help from an embassy grantee NGO named Slovo 21.

Photo provided by Slovo 21

Last June, the embassy launched a new Ambassador’s Fund for Women’s Empowerment, which will support projects that encourage women’s political and economic participation, the latter through entrepreneurship. The fund will also combat stereotypes and prevent gender-based violence.

Within a matter of weeks, the NGO community submitted 30 project ideas. The embassy’s grants committee selected three outstanding projects, including one from the Czech NGO named Forum 50%, which is now conducting leadership workshops for newly elected female politicians. Forum 50% President Jana Smiggels Kavková said the funding “enables us to raise awareness about the need to achieve parity between women and men in decision-making.”

The fund also underwrote a project by the NGO Czechitas to empower young women by providing them IT skills. The third project, undertaken by the NGO Konsent, will raise awareness about rape through community discussions, art exhibitions and a media campaign.

The embassy also regularly awards small grants focused on gender equality, including those for projects that support women’s leadership within the nation’s minority communities. In one | *Cont.* | ▼

Young women improve their digital literacy through activities run by a representative of the NGO Czechitas.
Photo provided by Czechitas





To encourage girls to study science and technology, Czech University students conduct a robotics program at the post's American Center. *Photo by Tarek AbuSham*

such case, the embassy funded the NGO named Slovo 21 to support a network of Roma women leaders to assist victims of domestic violence.

Embassy staff members interact regularly with up-and-coming Czech women leaders from a range of sectors. These women face barriers to participation in their sectors and have few opportunities to meet or interact with each other. To bring these leaders together and spur discussions, the embassy launched the Czech Women's Leadership Forum in early 2016. This group of 80 midlevel women from government, business, academia, culture and the nonprofit sector regularly meet with American experts provided by the embassy. Discussions have addressed political participation, women in science and technology, and entrepreneurship.

The forum's members convened at the Chief of Mission Residence on Sept. 21 for a reception where Ambassador Andrew Schapiro spoke about the importance of women's leadership and announced the empowerment grant winners. The embassy expanded the Forum by encouraging each member to attend with another influential woman and also invited Czech experts in gender equality, as well as female ambassadors to the Czech Republic. | *Cont.* | ▼

One forum member, Marcela Linkova, director of the Center of Gender and Science at the Czech Academy of Sciences, said she enjoyed meeting interesting and highly motivated American women. “Sharing experiences and mutual learning is always so important, she said, lauding Ambassador Schapiro, his spouse and embassy staff for creating “a totally unique environment of support for women’s empowerment in entrepreneurship, research and politics during their tenure in Prague.”

The embassy is also working to break down stereotypes that discourage young women from pursuing careers that are viewed as not for girls, including those in the security, sciences and political fields. To inspire Czech women to consider military and security careers, promote workforce equality and encourage recruitment of women, the embassy invited U.S. Navy Adm. Michelle J. Howard to Prague to speak with government and public audiences about women’s equality in the workforce. Howard, who came accompanied by four other female U.S. military officers, is the Navy’s first four-star female officer. She spoke on the issues, challenges and opportunities women face in all fields of professional life, including the military.

Embassy Political-Military Officer Nooshin Soltani, said the program, which included Brig. Gen. Giselle Wilz of the Sarajevo NATO Command and Rear Adm. Shoshana Chatfield of USNATO, was a first for the Czech Republic. A female civilian from the Czech Ministry of Defense commented that the event “confirmed my conviction that I am on the right track and that it is worth the effort.”

In another outreach, the post’s Public Affairs Office invited Tufts University Associate Dean and Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering Karen Panetta to address Czech women leaders in May. In a roundtable discussion joined by Ambassador Schapiro, Panetta spoke on strategies for attracting women to science, technology, engineering and math fields, while Schapiro noted that such fields are vital to addressing shared global challenges.

In another program focused on empowerment, sponsored by the embassy and the American Friends of the Czech Republic, U.S. congresswoman Jan Schakowsky met with Czech women leaders in September, encouraging attendees to run for political office. Participants spoke of the lack of support from political parties, impenetrable “old-boys” networks and how the nation has few child care options, all impediments to political careers.

Similarly, in March, the embassy invited U.S. political campaign expert Jessica Grounds to visit, to conduct discussions and workshops with Czech female political leaders and give a presentation at the American Center on the U.S. electoral process. For Global Entrepreneurship Week in 2016, the section organized a panel of four female immigrants to the Czech Republic who overcame obstacles to starting their own startup businesses including an Arabic language school, an ethnic food catering business and a travel agency.

The embassy also hosts panels and workshops on women’s leadership at its American Spaces, where U.S. exchange program alumni, grantees and experts speak. For instance, the Czech International Visitor Alumni Club recently organized a panel on gender equality, and a | *Cont.* | ▼



Adm. Michelle J. Howard, center, and Ambassador Andrew Schapiro, right, discuss gender equality at an event with Czech women leaders in December. *Photo by Thomas Krakora*

women-run student group from the Czech Technical University led a workshop on robotics for youth. Other embassy events on this score have included a discussion and screening of the documentary film “Four Women, Four Destinies Impacted by War” in September; the film features four Bosnian women who successfully integrated into the Czech Republic.

Using social media, the embassy marked the International Day of the Girl on Oct. 11 with release of a video showing Ambassador Schapiro’s support of the #DadsandDaughters campaign of the Secretary’s Office of Global Women’s Issues. This popular video, highlighting gender equality and girls’ rights, highlights the embassy’s programming and policies on women and leadership.

Looking forward, Embassy Prague has launched a new working group composed of staff from various sections and agencies. The group will examine how it can further support women’s equal participation and curb violence against women. ■

AMMAN

Jordan is crucial U.S. partner and friend

By Public Affairs Office staff, U.S. Embassy in Amman, Jordan



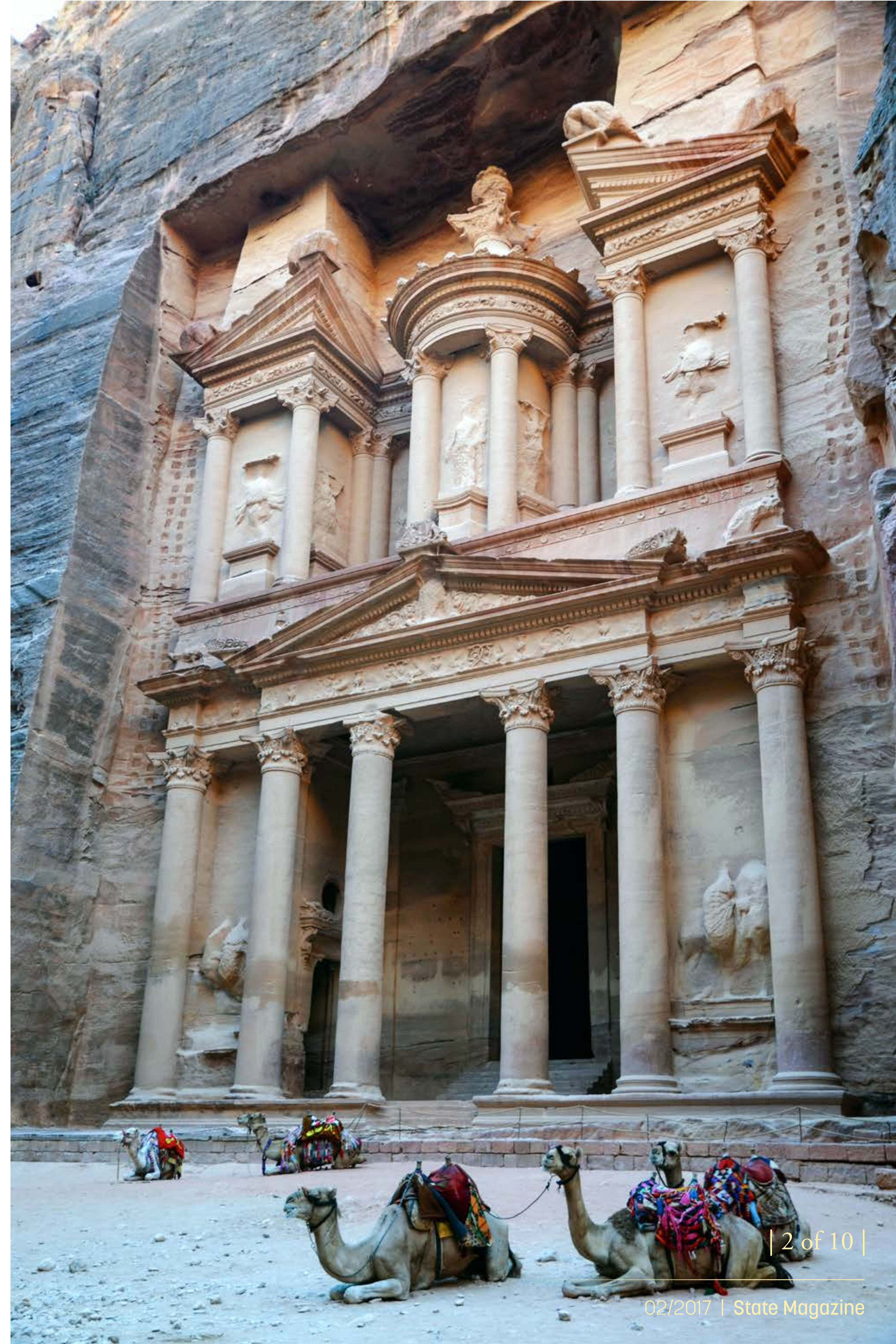
Opening page: A panoramic view of Amman taken from the Amman Citadel.
Photo by Ronald Woon

Once described as a quaint, quiet post, today's Embassy Amman is at the epicenter of issues that matter deeply to Washington and make a difference to Jordan, the region and beyond—from the fight against Da'esh, to the Syrian refugee crisis, to the promotion of Middle East peace. With more than 400 members of Congress visiting in the last 2 1/2 years, the largest USAID budget in the world in 2016 and the third largest Foreign Military Financing program, Embassy Amman is now one of the 10 biggest posts in terms of personnel and, increasingly, one of our busiest embassies.

But it is not just the meaningful work that makes Jordan a great place to serve. Jordanians are renowned for their hospitality, their commitment to education, and their love of children and family. These characteristics, along with some of the best tourist destinations in the region – including one of the wonders of the world in Petra – have made the Embassy a well-known family-friendly post and home to many dependents. As President Obama said last year when welcoming Jordan's King Abdullah II to the White House, "We're lucky to have a friend like Jordan."

"Since the establishment of diplomatic relations more than six decades ago, our friendship has been based on common goals and mutual respect," said Ambassador Alice G. Wells, who has led Embassy Amman | *Cont.* | ▼

At Petra, the site's iconic treasury building was featured prominently in the Hollywood blockbuster "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade."
Photo by Alda Kauffeld





Ambassador Wells promotes U.S.-Jordan commercial prosperity, which is growing thanks to the first U.S. Free Trade Agreement signed with any Middle Eastern country.
State Department Photo

since August 2014. “Our friendship is also rooted in shared values—in the belief that all people deserve an equal opportunity to build a better life for themselves and their children, and that human dignity and the virtue of tolerance demand respect.”

The United States has been Jordan’s stalwart international supporter, having provided more than \$15 billion in economic assistance to Jordan since its founding. During a December 2014 meeting with King Abdullah II, President Obama announced the United States would provide \$1 billion in annual assistance to Jordan for three years, making the overall U.S. assistance to Jordan among the largest in the world. USAID’s budget here exceeded \$800 million in 2016 alone.

The relationship extends beyond assistance to include robust security and military cooperation, economic engagement, more than 800 U.S. government VIP visitors last year and ever-increasing people-to-people exchanges.

Along with expanding portfolios and staff comes physical growth. In 2015, the embassy broke ground on a new annex. To be completed by the end of 2018, the new building will feature the latest in green technology, natural lighting, open spaces and water efficiency.

The project will expand the consular section in response to demand for consular services, offer increased space for the USAID mission



Construction on the embassy’s annex will be completed in 2018 and will include additional office space.

State Department Photo

and provide upgrades of critical infrastructure throughout the compound.

The result will be all-new and better facilities for Amman’s growing official and dependent population.

Jordan is located in a rough neighborhood. For the first time in more than 40 years, Jordanian soldiers and pilots are fighting side by side with the United States and other coalition partners to defend against extremist threats. The Jordanian people are demonstrating resilience and determination working to prevent extremists from undermining Jordan’s open, moderate and modernizing way of life. | *Cont.* | ▼



Ambassador Wells inspects a Blackhawk helicopter provided by the United States to the Jordan Armed Forces in 2015.

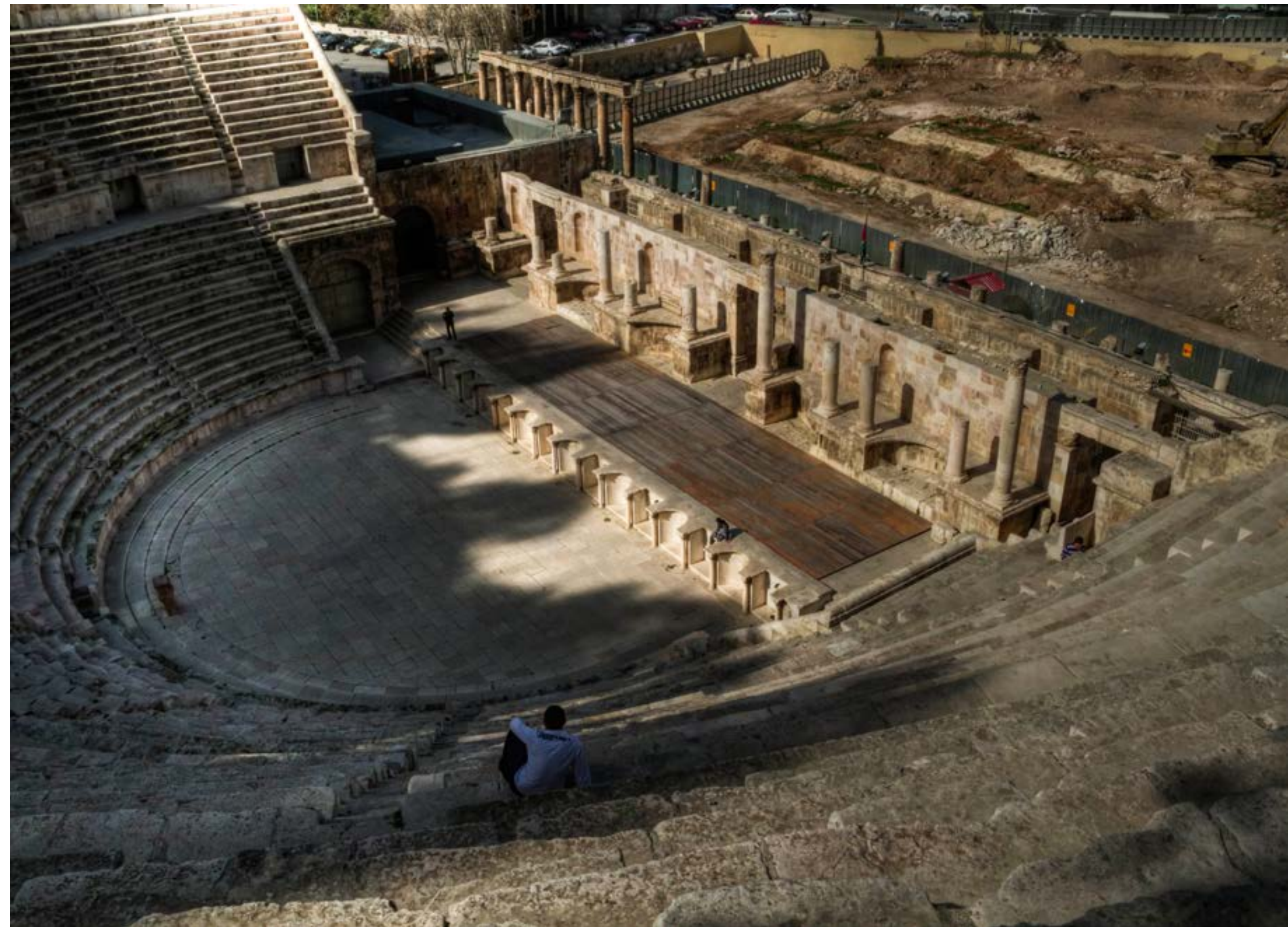
State Department photo

The United States is working together with the Jordan Armed Forces to counter threats in the region, providing one of the largest amounts of U.S. Foreign Military Financing to any country in the world and helping secure Jordan's borders through a \$188 million border project to keep extremists out.

And the U.S. is working with Jordan to address the tremendous burden that hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees have placed on the country's water, health and education infrastructure. To put it into perspective—what Jordan has done is equivalent to the U.S. adding another state with the population of Texas. The United States is Jordan's closest partner in addressing the Syrian refugee crisis, investing in its water infrastructure, increasing the capacity of the health care sector and renovating and expanding classrooms to enable Jordan to educate all children in Jordan, including Syrian refugees.

But despite these security and resource challenges, 2016 was another banner year for the U.S.-Jordan commercial partnership, which stretches to almost every corner of the United States and Jordan. From January to September, Jordanian exports to the United States rose 5.5 percent—an increase of more than \$60 million.

Much of this growth has been thanks to the possibilities facilitated by the first Free Trade Agreement the United States signed with a Middle Eastern country. Today, for example, U.S. products are found on shelves throughout Jordan and are widely viewed as superior to other international goods in quality. At the same



View of the roman amphitheatre in Amman, Jordan.

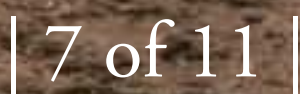
Photo by Ronald Woan

time, Jordanian garment manufacturers are supplying U.S. name brands like Under Armour and Victoria's Secret.

An important part of the economic relationship is helping support growth and development, including helping to address youth unemployment and the low participation rate of women—only around 13 percent—in Jordan's workforce.

In terms of community life, Mission Jordan has much to offer. Annie Khoury, an institution in Embassy Amman's Community Liaison Office, has helped new American families settle in for years. She's one of the biggest boosters of what Amman has to offer and is quick with her advice for a great introductory | *Cont.* | ▼

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A large group of female soldiers in camouflage uniforms and helmets, some holding rifles, posing for a group photo in front of a building. A woman in a dark uniform with red and white stripes on the sleeves is kneeling in the front center.

|||||

The U.S. partnership with Jordan continues to grow and prosper, a testament to a meaningful friendship that now exceeds 65 years. Ambassador

It's a challenge the mission community embraces. "There is no better team than Embassy Amman," the ambassador noted, "and no finer group of people to navigate what continues to be a very challenging period." ■

Photo by Tobias Bradford



At a Glance

Jordan



Capital:
Amman

Government Type:
parliamentary constitutional monarchy

Area:
89,342 sq km

Population:
8,185,384

Major urban areas:
Amman 1.155 million (2015)

Ethnic groups:
Arab 98%, Circassian 1%, Armenian 1%

Languages:
Arabic (official), English (widely understood among upper and middle classes)

Religions:
Muslim 97.2% (official; predominantly Sunni), Christian 2.2% (majority Greek Orthodox, but some Greek and Roman Catholics, Syrian Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, and Protestant denominations), Buddhist 0.4%, Hindu 0.1%, Jewish <0.1%, folk religionist <0.1%, unaffiliated <0.1%, other <0.1% (2010 est.)

Exports (commodities):
textiles, fertilizers, potash, phosphates, vegetables, pharmaceuticals

Export partners:
U.S. 21%, Saudi Arabia 16.5%, Iraq 10.3%, India 8.7%, UAE 4.8%, Kuwait 4.4% (2015)

Imports:
crude oil, refined petroleum products, machinery, transport equipment, iron, cereals

Import partners:
Saudi Arabia 15.4%, China 12.8%, US 6.2%, Germany 4.7%, UAE 4.2% (2015)

Currency:
Jordanian Dinar

Internet country code:
.jo

* The CIA World Factbook



Seeds for Change

Alumni find solutions to local challenges

By Phoenix Ricks, alumni outreach specialist, and Sophia Stergiou, regional alumni coordinator for the western hemisphere, Office of Alumni Affairs, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Upon returning home from her exchange program on communications and journalism, Inga Springe, a Latvian alumna of the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship program, worked to improve local journalists' tools and training for investigative reporting. Drawing on her U.S. experience, she established the Baltic Center for Investigative Journalism (Re:Baltica), the first cross-national and nonprofit investigative journalism organization in the Baltics. Started with seed funding from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' (ECA) Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund (AEIF), the now-self-sustaining organization has covered hard-hitting issues, including fraudulent tax schemes, shadowy donors to Baltic political parties and social inequality in Latvia. By equipping journalists with investigative reporting tools, the alumna made a concrete contribution toward the development of an objective, independent and professional media in her country.

The program is just one example of the successes arising out of the annual AEIF competition, which will launch this spring on alumni.state.gov/aeif. Through the competition, thousands of alumni of U.S. government-sponsored exchanges, such as the Fulbright program or the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), have proposed solutions to pressing challenges. AEIF projects demonstrate the outstanding multiplier effect on the initial investment in exchange programs. Additionally, the competition is another tool for U.S. missions to continue their engagement with alumni and advance their goals and initiatives. Annually, alumni submit an average of 900 AEIF project proposals, making the competition one of ECA's most successful outreach initiatives. | *Cont.* | ▼



On the steps of Cafesjian Center for the Arts in Yerevan, people of all abilities dance to Tchaikovsky's "Waltz of the Flowers." *Photos by Embassy Yerevan*



Science fair attendees gather to view a demonstration in Paraguay, thanks to the work of a winning AEIF team.

Embassy Asuncion photo

science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers for underserved youth. Fulbright alumni from Paraguay created Techauka, a series of science fairs across the country that reached more than 26,000 elementary and high school students and teachers. Seventy alumni volunteered at the fairs, and 90 public and private organizations provided in-kind donations and expertise in STEM.

Similarly, in Tunisia, through the Young Tunisian Coders Academy (YTCA) program, a team of alumni is training Tunisian students, ages 10–15, in coding and other programming skills that can be used to produce mobile applications, games and software. In March, the team ended the 2016 program with a national competition in Scratch computer programming.

Addressing inequality is a common priority in many proposals. For example, alumni who learned about the Montgomery bus boycotts while on exchanges in Alabama proposed projects to address diversity and inclusion in their community. In another project, in one of Tajikistan's poorest and most conservative areas, IVLP alumni created five girls' clubs that serve more than 300 girls and offer workshops on such areas as girls in sports, women's rights and domestic violence. The girls gather every Saturday for discussions on such topics as gender equality and volunteerism, and also learn computer skills and public speaking. In July, the girls'

Working in small teams, alumni submit project proposals with budgets of up to \$25,000. Projects have focused on increasing access to education, empowering women and girls, and promoting civic participation. Often, they involve trainings, awareness campaigns, and leadership and empowerment initiatives.

Exchange alumni regularly propose and implement projects that promote

clubs gathered for a weeklong summer camp geared to developing confident girls who are engaged in their community. (While most local American Corner visitors used to be boys, now girls make up the majority, thanks to that project.)

Similarly, in 2015 a team of seven Cameroonian alumni of the IVLP, Mandela Washington Fellowship (MWF) and TechWomen program received AEIF funding for their Creative Arts for Girls Empowerment project. The project uses debates, dramas and songs to raise awareness of school-related gender based violence and its effects on girls' education and socioeconomic advancement. In

the spring of 2016, the project's team partnered with a local nonprofit (founded by a 2014 MWF alumna) to write and direct the play "Of Girls Abused." The show has been performed for more than 4,000 youth, parents, teachers and community leaders, with performances followed by moderated dialogue on strategies for building safe

schools and communities where everyone, especially girls, can thrive.

Fulbright alumni in Mexico have contributed to leadership initiatives by empowering local students from indigenous backgrounds. With AEIF seed funding, they started the Leadership Program for Indigenous Youth at the Universidad de las Américas Puebla. The now-self-sustaining program builds students' confidence and networking and leadership skills, furthering a mission goal of promoting social inclusion of marginalized groups. The program now reaches hundreds of indigenous students, and its graduates advocate for indigenous people's rights, start businesses and pursue higher education. | *Cont.* | ▼



At the American Corner in Garm, Tajikistan, the AEIF project Ambassadors of Change empowers girls to be confident, educated and active citizens.

Photo by Hayotov Mansurjon

AEIF projects also advocate for people with disabilities. For instance, after years of communist rule in Mongolia, most buildings and roads in the capital, Ulaanbaatar, don't meet the needs of those using wheelchairs. Responding, an alumni team created a user-friendly mapping tool for wheelchair users, using an existing open source map (Wheelmap.org). That website provides information in Mongolian on the wheelchair accessibility of entrances, elevators and bathrooms of buildings in the city's center, including public buildings and curbs at intersections in central Ulaanbaatar.

Meanwhile, in Armenia, an AEIF team organized a flash mob brought together by social media to support people with disabilities; the event showcased 80 dancers of all abilities, performing with professional dancers to Tchaikovsky's "Waltz of the Flowers." To reach a broader audience, that project will conclude with a classical performance and documentary on animal therapy.



The AEIF-funded Young Tunisian Coders Academy program trains students ages 10-15 in computer coding, mobile application development and gaming software.

State Department Photo

The AEIF projects also promote change through communication and understanding, such as by working with students and youth to find peaceful approaches to groups with differing perspectives. For instance, Egyptian alumni hosted a week-long training camp for nearly 100 students, selected from almost 400 applications from

10 cities, to help the students build communication skills and find more effective and constructive ways to discuss their varying viewpoints through debating. Another example is the 2014 Expanding INSIGHTS project in Jamaica, which taught children strategies to solve dilemmas and accept differences. The program also gave teachers tools to increase positive behavior, improving the students' learning experiences. It has since been expanded to include an official INSIGHTS center at the University of the West Indies, Mona, reaching 266 more children.

Since its inception in 2011, AEIF has funded more than 300 projects and become the go-to way for exchange alumni to better their communities. Responding to the competition's predetermined policy themes, alumni craft proposals reflecting their communities' needs, seeking lasting change. Often projects reach areas where embassy officials cannot travel; always, they draw on skills and knowledge alumni gained in the United States and build on the ECA investment to reach hundreds in their communities. From improving press freedom to combatting gender-based violence and promoting sustainable development, the projects are making a difference around the world. ■



Students drawn from indigenous groups from throughout Mexico learn leadership and networking through the AEIF project called the Indigenous Student Leadership Program.

Photo by Oscar Rey Meneses

LYING IN STATE: THE BIG BRIEFING

WE'RE GETTING READY TO
BRIEF THE NEW AMBASSADOR.

OKAY, LET ME GIVE YOU
A FEW GUIDELINES FOR
BRIEFING AMBASSADOR



FIRST, BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT
AND GET STRAIGHT TO THE POINT.
NO WORDPLAY - THE EXCEPTION
IS THE OCCASIONAL RIBALD LIMERICK,
WHICH THE AMBASSADOR APPRECIATES
WHEN APPROPRIATE.



AGUELER 2017

HE WILL ASK QUESTIONS, PROBING
QUESTIONS AND HE CAN SMELL FEAR
LIKE A HOBO SMELLS PIES. ALSO, HIS
FAVORITE COLOR IS GREEN, AND HE
PREFERS NOT TO HEAR WORDS
BEGINNING WITH THE LETTER "S."



ALRIGHTY,
THEN!

OH, AND YOU'LL
KNOW HE'S
DISPLEASED IF HIS
EYES BEGIN TO GLOW
RED AND SMOKE EMERGES
FROM HIS NOSTRILS.



... SO SUMMARIZING THE STRATEGIC
SITUATION SUCCINCTLY - WAIT, NO!
UH, THERE ONCE
WAS A BRIEFER
FROM NANTUCKET...



FSI at 70

Preparing America's diplomats for tomorrow today

By Nancy McEldowney, director, Foreign Service Institute



FSI was originally housed in this Washington, D.C., building. *State Department photo*

In 1947, then-Secretary of State George Marshall established FSI to “improve the skills, broaden the understanding, and develop the abilities” of the Department’s workforce. In the intervening seven decades, FSI has evolved from its original home in a modest row house near C Street, NW, where instructors taught a handful of courses to about a dozen students, into its present location on a 70-acre campus with five overseas operations

that support more than 200,000 annual enrollments.

FSI has a long and proud tradition of advancing American foreign affairs by boosting the success of diplomats. But as FSI marks its 70th anniversary, its focus is not on the past. Instead, the institute’s leaders are racing to prepare for an uncertain future in the midst of dramatic global change. The international challenges facing the United States are more difficult than ever, and the success of American national security and leadership around the world will depend on the nation’s ability to modernize its approaches, institutions and way of thinking. FSI is embracing the “innovation imperative” and doing everything possible to identify emerging trend lines and the skills necessary to shape them.

Education & Training

A few examples of recent innovations include:

- New courses, such as Tomorrow Now, which are designed to highlight the dramatic changes underway in science, culture, governance and the global environment. With a heavy emphasis on transformative technologies, from artificial intelligence and 3D printing to big data and crowdsourcing, Tomorrow Now places Department employees squarely in the midst of these evolving trends and challenges them to utilize strategic forecasting, social media and data visualization to devise innovative responses.
- New competencies, such as design thinking, systems thinking and the ability to identify and analyze unintended consequences have been woven into FSI’s core training, so that people emerge not just better informed on the issues but also better equipped with the kind of analytical skills necessary for the intellectual agility that underpins experimentation and innovation.
- New methodologies, such as on-demand virtual training, to meet the immediate needs of the Department’s global workforce. Furthermore, new technologies for the classroom, such as Google Earth Flight Deck, virtual reality and holodeck immersion, are being used across FSI.
- New approaches, such as the identification of diplomatic best practices and lessons learned, are catalyzing knowledge management and enabling a true learning culture. The Center for the Study of the Conduct of Diplomacy (CSCD) conducts comparative critical analysis of recent on-the-ground experience and then develops case studies that are woven into tradecraft training.

There is much more underway at FSI, and the institute’s leaders hope to launch a Department-wide conversation about these many initiatives and the future of diplomacy throughout this anniversary year. Check out upcoming announcements here in State Magazine, in cables and in various other fora. FSI wants to engage with Department employees, hear their views and work together to make FSI the very best it can be. Contact FSI via email at FSIat70@state.gov to get the conversation started. ■

Retirements

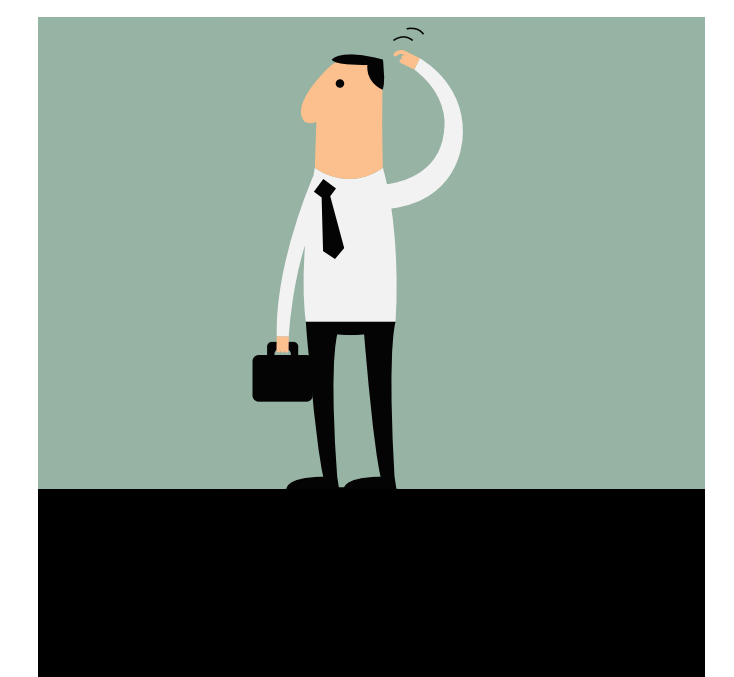
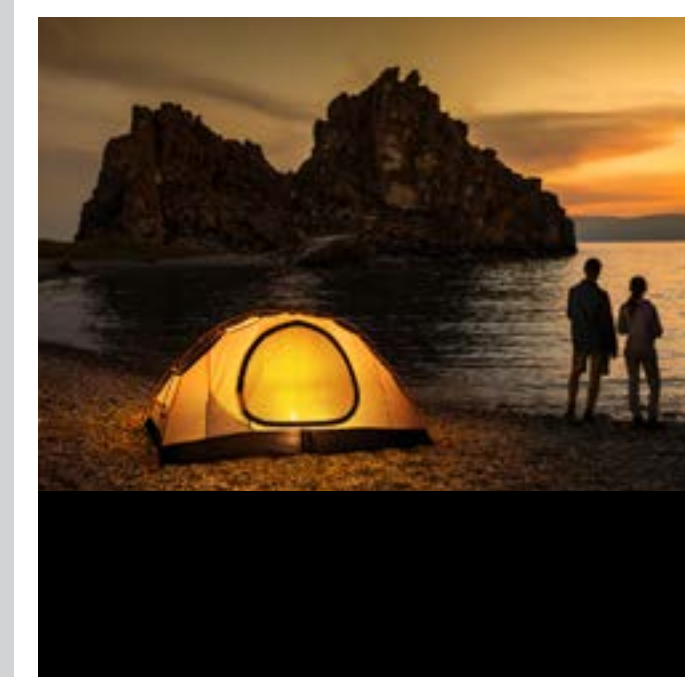
Civil Service

Boone, Anita L.
Downing, Ruby A.
Foynes, Desmond P.
Hake, Larry M.
Harris, Gail V.
Husar, Patrick David
Moe, Grace Tyler
Washington Jr., Henry L.
Webster, James K.
Zalewski, Regina L.

Foreign Service

Adams, Linda D.
Adams, Sarah K.
Akins Jr., James Nolan
Aycock, Barbara S.
Barkley, Andrea Lynn
Binsol, Armando Quinto
Cobbs, Bart D.
Coen, Brian E.
Darlow, Laurie L.
Deubel, Andrew J.
Doetsch, Mary P.
Draper, Mary Dale
Everhart, Christine E.
Fair, Janice R.

Gibbons, Thomas B.
Green, Cheryl L.
Hayden, Barbara J.
Hoover, John E.
Horkey, Charles J.
Jesser, David P.
Jones, Deborah Kay
Koehler, Marc Daniel
Lind, Eric T.
Malone, Daniel Paul
Marafino, Sherrie Lynn
McCarthy, Brian J.
McDowell, Diana L.
Namm, Adam E.
Nutter, Julie H.
Olson Jr., Richard Gustave
Patin, Paul B.
Pearce, David Duane
Peoples, Kathleen
Pokela, Elizabeth J.
Romano, Daniel Frank
Schuch, John M.
Shea, William Edward
Via, Michael A.
Viscal, Jorge
Walther, Margaret M.
Webb Jr, Donald J.
Williams, Donald C.
Ziadeh, Susan L.

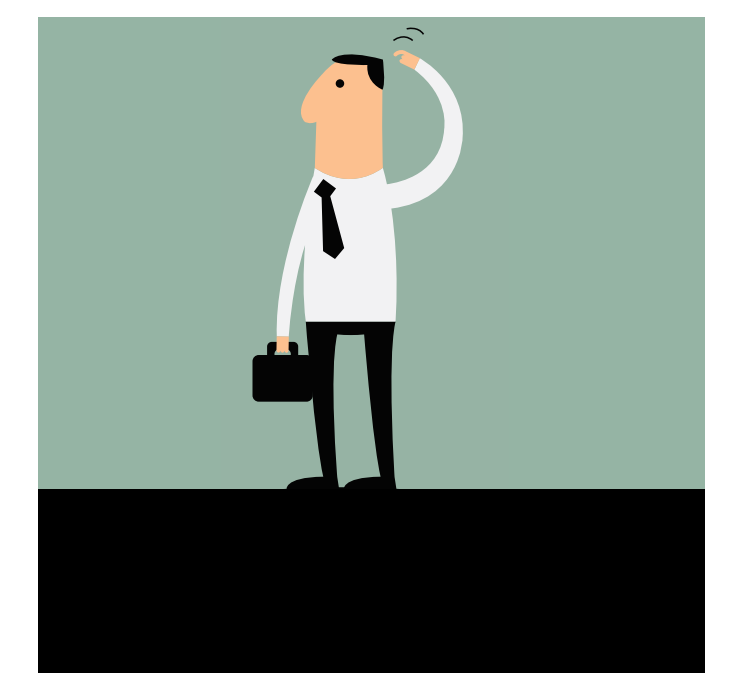
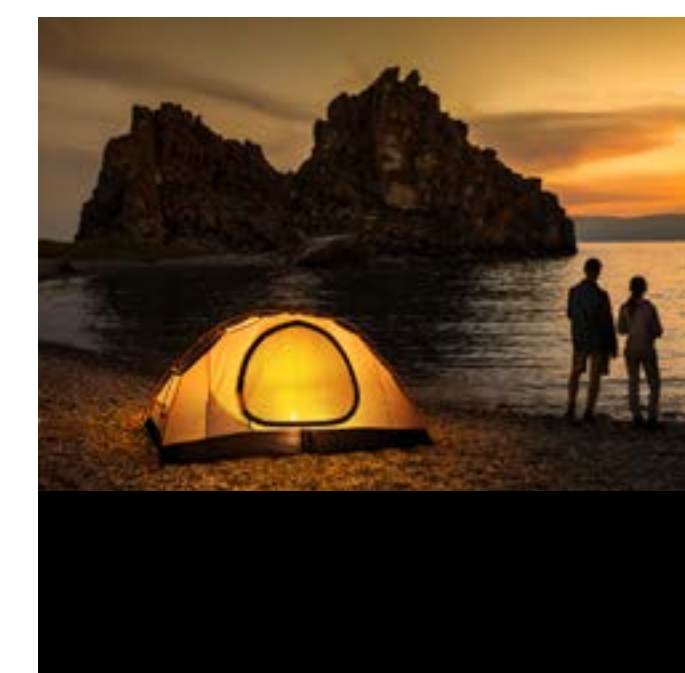


Ethics Answers

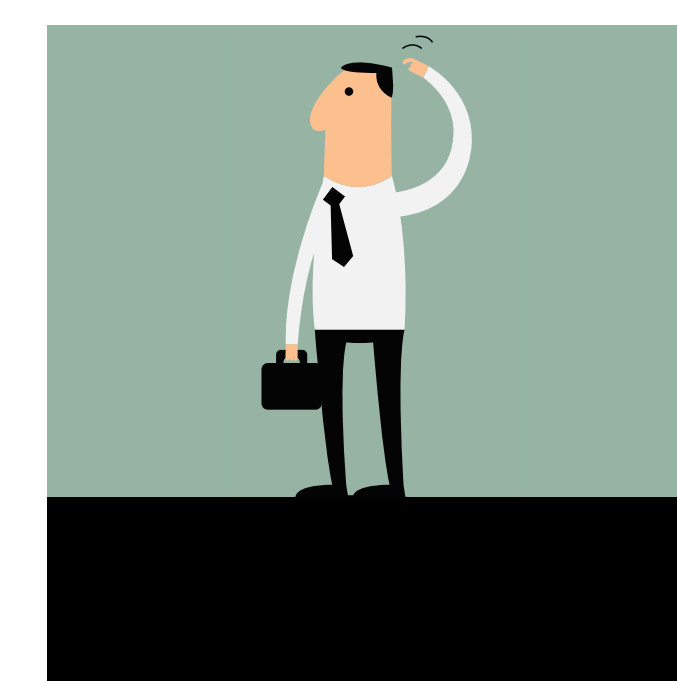
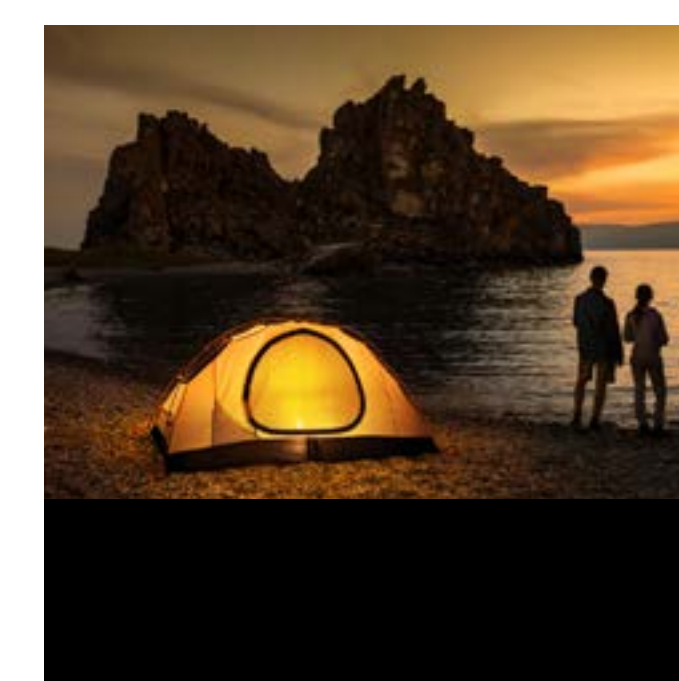
Q: Now that the election is over, I am wondering if Hatch Act restrictions still apply? Namely, what sort of political activity can I engage in while in the United States?

A: The Hatch Act applies year-round, regardless of election cycles. The Hatch Act restricts employees, while on duty or in a federal office building, from engaging in partisan political activity—meaning activity aimed at the success or failure of a political party, partisan political group (e.g., a political action committee) or announced candidate in a future election. The Hatch Act also restricts employees, even when they’re outside of the workplace, from soliciting or accepting political contributions, running for office or using their titles or official resources in connection with partisan political activity. Other forms of political activity are permitted, although the Hatch Act and Department policy impose additional restrictions on the Senior Executive Service and political appointees. (Note the Department policy in 3 FAM 4123.3 on employees’ political activities while posted or on TDY abroad.) Neither the Hatch Act nor Department policy on this matter restrict personal expression or participation in nonpartisan groups or events that are nonpartisan in nature.

If you have specific questions about whether you can participate in a certain political activity without violating the Hatch Act or the Department’s guidance, please email the Ethics Attorney Mailbox at ethicsattorneymailbox@state.gov.



Department Highly Ranked as Workplace



Max Stier, president and CEO of the Partnership for Public Service, presents Deputy Secretary Heather Higginbottom with the agency's Best Places to Work award. The annual ranking, produced by the nonprofit organization and the consulting firm Deloitte, placed the Department among the top five large federal agencies. The assessment measures employee attitudes regarding 10 workplace categories, including effective leadership, innovation, work-life balance, pay and support for diversity. ■

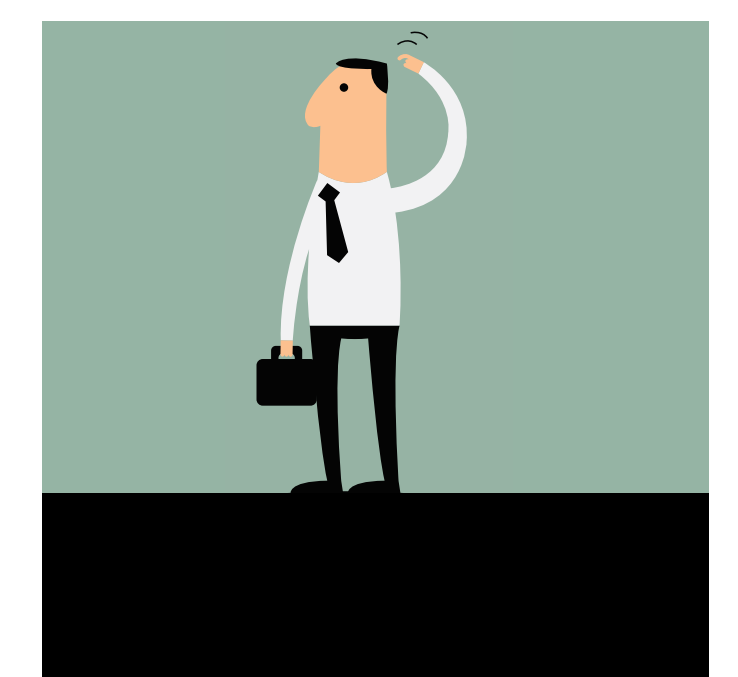
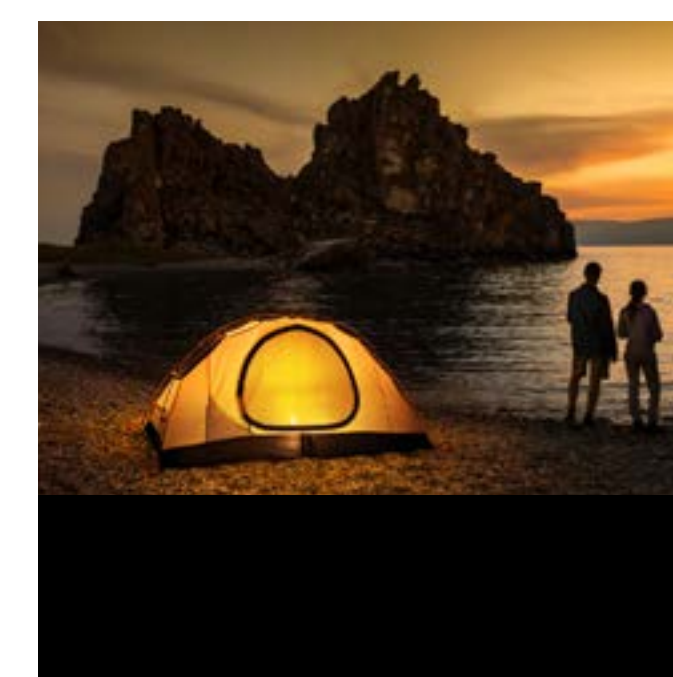
Photo by Audrey Lew

Ambassador Honors PEPFAR Heroes



On Dec. 5 in recognition of World AIDS Day, Ambassador to Uganda Deborah R. Malac, third from right, posed with Uganda's five 2016 PEPFAR Heroes, individuals who have dedicated their personal and professional efforts to creating an AIDS-free generation in the country. ■

Photo by Chris Lubega

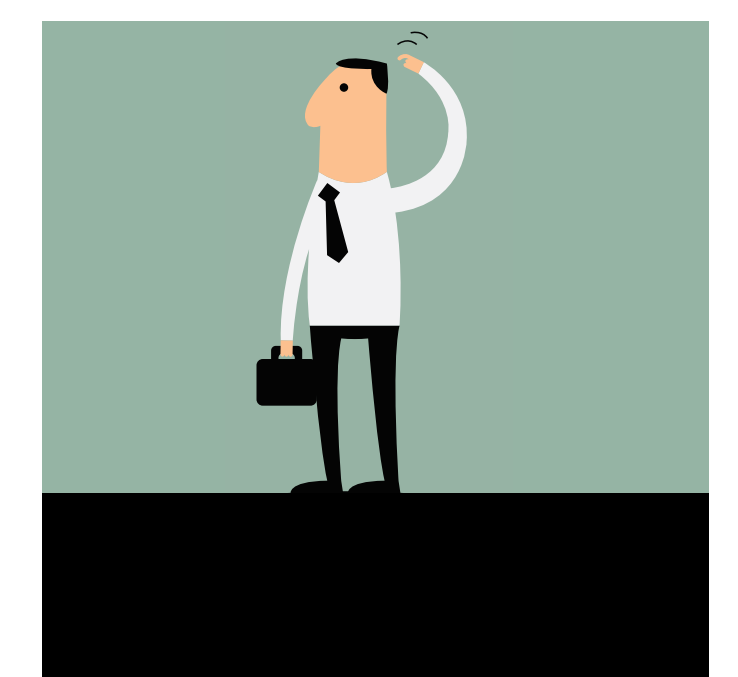
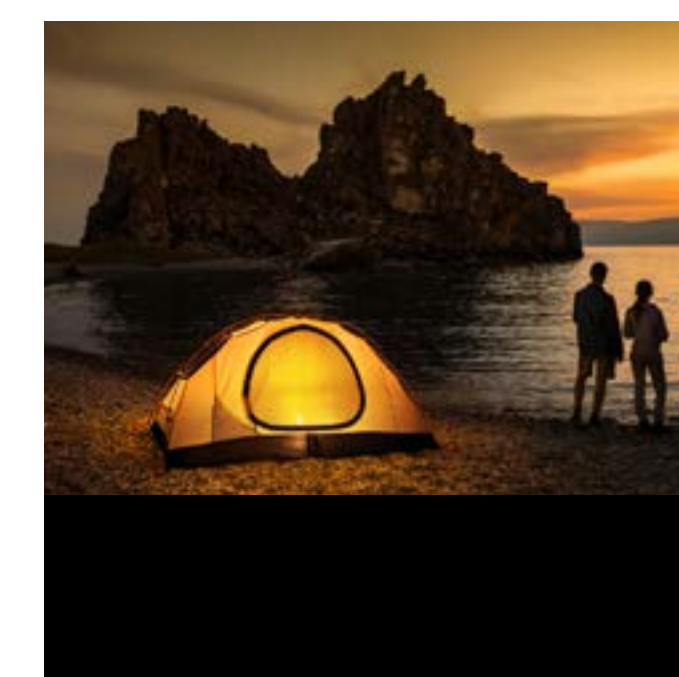


Mini-Golf Highlights Close of CFC



Jeffrey Miller, director of the Office of Resource Management and Organizational Analysis (RMA), poses with a snowman that decorated RMA's mini-golf fundraiser for the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) of the capital area. The RMA fundraiser, one of several held by Department offices for the 2016 CFC, raised more than \$1,000. By the time giving ended Dec. 31, the Department had raised \$1.9 million for the CFC. ■

Photo by Ed Warner

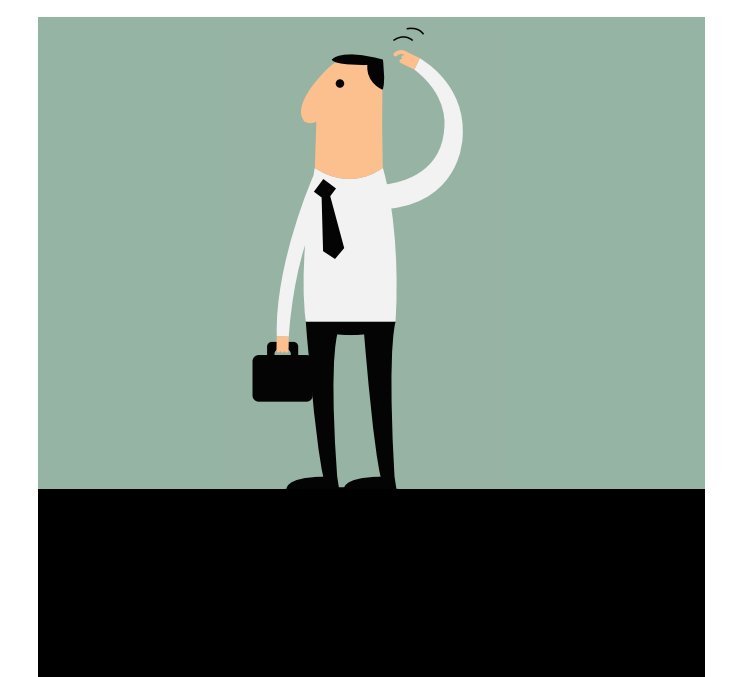
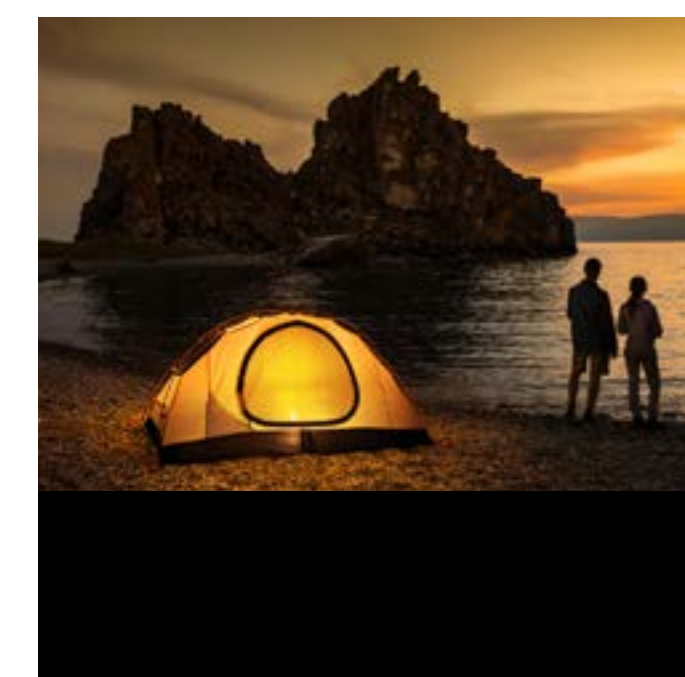


Monrovia, Atlanta Students Connect



PAO Paul Hinshaw of the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia, Liberia, far right, meets with some of the 30 Science Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) students from the Cathedral Catholic High School near the embassy as the students were linked by video in December with a similar number of students from a suburban Atlanta school. During the remaining academic year, the students will plan and lead monthly digital videoconference-based interactions on topics of mutual interest, including STEM as well as cultural issues. ■

Photo by Embassy Monrovia

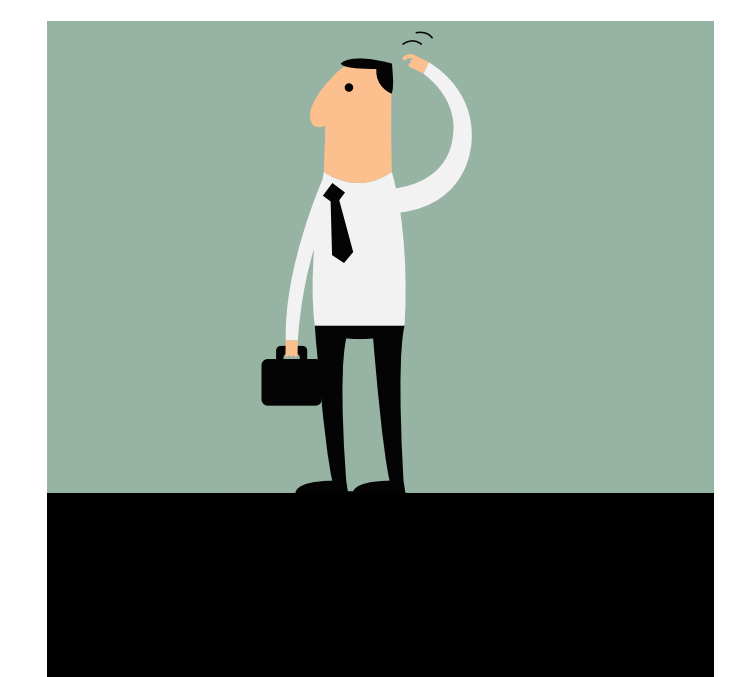
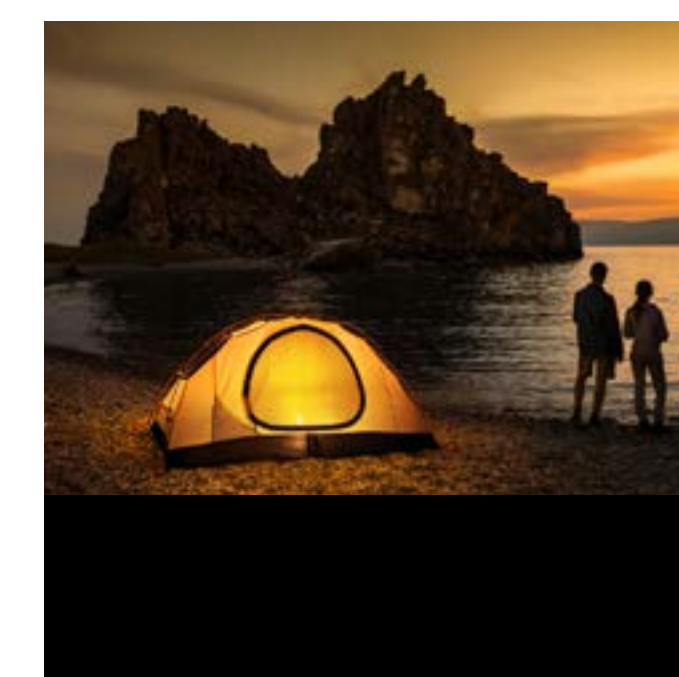


Jazz Quartet Engages Youth



American jazz flutist Jamie Baum, second from left at front, plays alongside young Spanish jazz musicians during her ensemble's November visit to Barcelona. She played at the U.S. Consulate in Barcelona's new American Space, where 150 music students participated, and at several municipal music schools that offer jazz programs for youth. The quartet's visit culminated in a free concert at a jazz venue. ■

Photo by Consulate General Barcelona

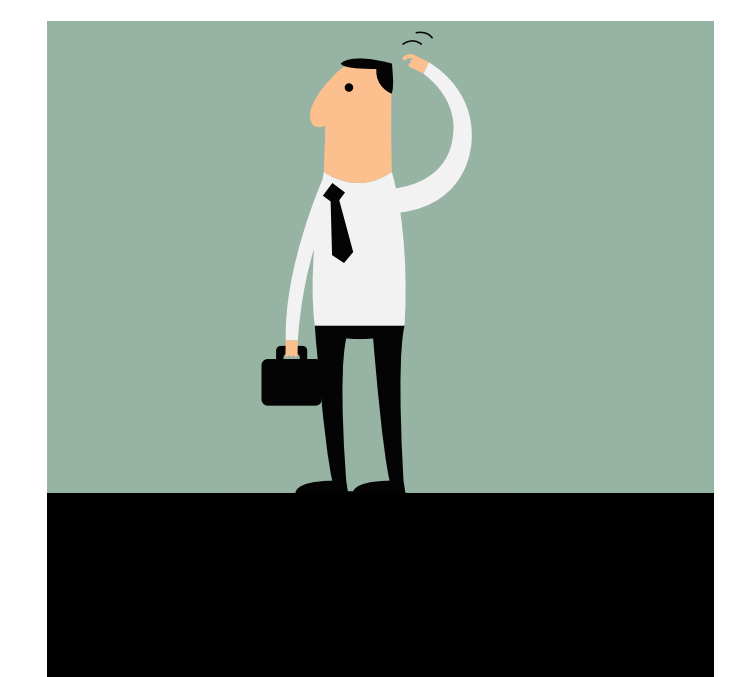
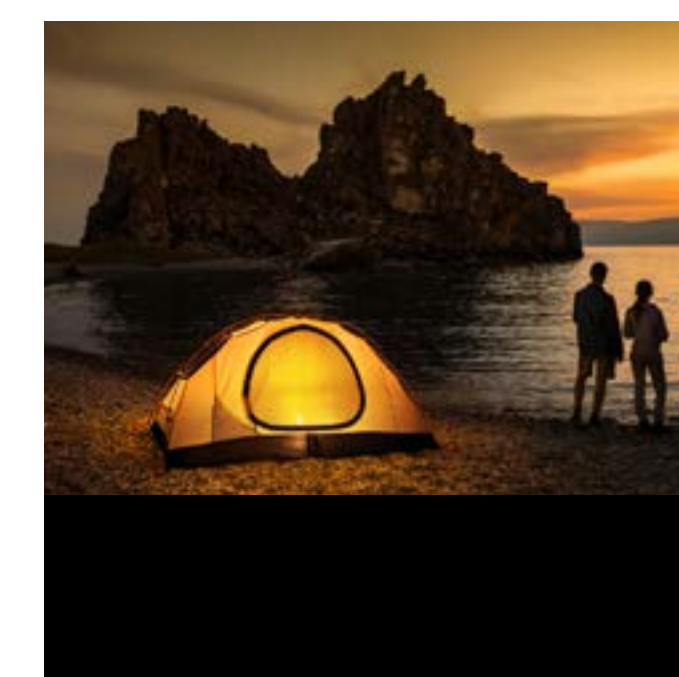


Embassy Welcomes Soccer Team



Ambassador Catherine Ebert-Gray, right, welcomes a member of the U.S. U-20 Women's National Soccer Team to Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, for the team's Nov. 13–Dec. 3 competition in the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup. The embassy organized media interviews with the team's accompanying family members. Ambassador Ebert-Gray invited the team and family members to Thanksgiving dinner at her residence, and families and local fans cheered the team during the matches. ■

Photo by Cyril Akuani



In Memoriam

Dale Crissey DeButts



Dale Crissey DeButts, 95, died Nov. 15 in Chesterfield, Va., of heart failure. After serving in the Pacific during World War II as a Navy flight engineer and gunner, DeButts graduated from Iowa State University in 1948. As a vocational/technical education advisor, his Foreign Service career took him to Thailand in 1959. From 1965 to 1985, he was attached to USAID, serving in Thailand, Vietnam and Egypt. He also served under contracts in Indonesia, Jamaica and Oman.



In Memoriam

Harlan J. Dirks



Harlan J. Dirks, 91, died Dec. 1 at his home in Riderwood Village in Silver Spring, Md. A native of Madison, S.D., Dirks, who held a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics, joined the Foreign Agricultural Service in 1966. His overseas assignments included Denmark, Norway, Australia, USSR, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania. He participated in the 1973 Senior Seminar and enjoyed walking, golf, travel, sports and listening to country music.



In Memoriam

Kathaleen Leta Gilstrap



Kathaleen Leta Gilstrap, 79, the wife of retired FSO Lewis Gilstrap, died Dec. 25 in Plantation, Fla. She accompanied her husband on assignments to Oslo, Stockholm, Moscow and Wellington while he was assigned to the embassies' Army Attaché offices. Lewis retired from the Army in 1979 and joined the Department of State, with assignments to Kingston, Kuala Lumpur, Panama and El Salvador. They retired to Florida in 1999. She was an accomplished pianist and aspiring artist, but was most proud of her role as wife and mother to her two sons.



In Memoriam

Michael A.C. “Andy” Jordan



Michael A.C. “Andy” Jordan died Dec. 18 while serving in Juba, South Sudan. As a Department of State employee, he served in the Foreign Service 13 years, at embassies in Baghdad, Brussels, Karachi, Tel Aviv, Lusaka, Tbilisi and Nairobi. His calm demeanor and creative problem solving abilities were invaluable.



In Memoriam

Harvey G. Kittredge, Jr.



Harvey G. Kittredge Jr., a retired FSO, died Dec. 31 at 94 in Beaufort, S.C. Born in Dayton, Ohio, he attended Cornell University and served three years in the Army during World War II. In 1951, he moved with his wife Betty to France and earned a Diplome de Langue from the Alliance Francaise, using the GI Bill. After joining the Foreign Service, he was posted in France, French-speaking Vietnam, Japan and Israel. He retired in 1972 and split his time between Newfields, N.H., and Normandy, France, then spent 25 years along a South Carolina creek patrolled by dolphins and osprey.



In Memoriam

John J. Leimanis



John J. Leimanis, 77, died in Riga, Latvia, after a long battle with illness. Born in Latvia, Leimanis came to the United States in 1949, settling in Maryland. He earned a Master of Science in civil engineering from The George Washington University and served in the Navy for five years with the Naval Facilities Engineering Command. He then joined the Department of State as a research engineer. He worked for the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations for 20 years, focusing on new construction, security and blast-resistant materials.



In Memoriam

Charles Wakefield “Wakie” Martin

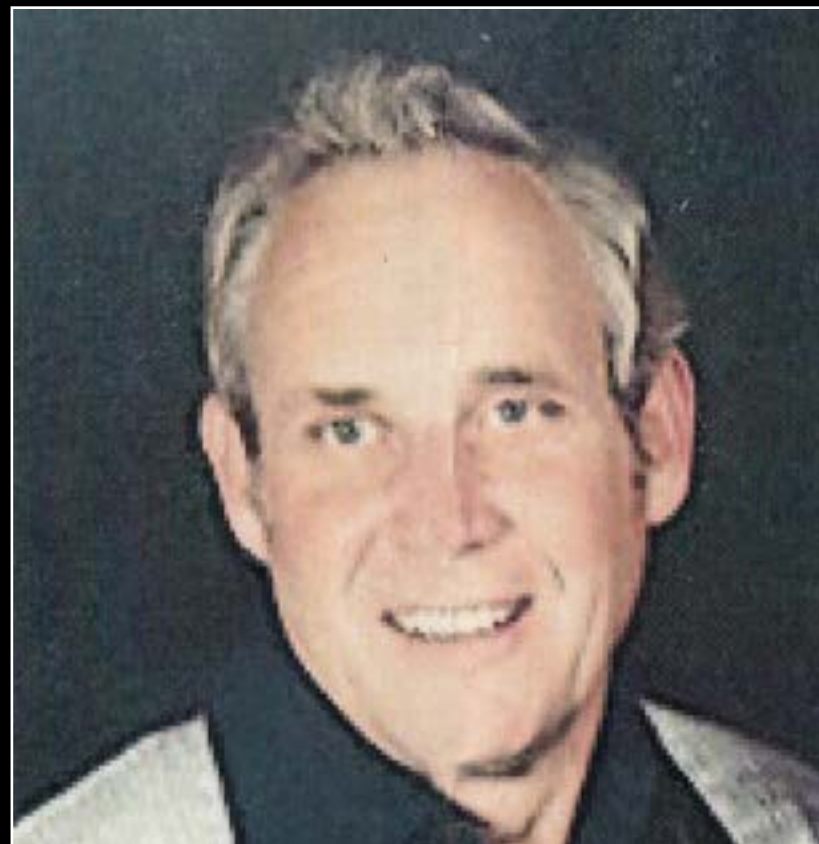


Charles Wakefield “Wakie” Martin, 61, a retired FSO, died Oct. 11 at his home in Arlington, Va. of brain cancer. After serving as a Civil Service employee in the Bureau of Consular Affairs, he joined the Foreign Service as a management officer in 1996. He and his wife, FSO Paula Thiede, served together in Panama, Venezuela, Poland, Pakistan, Italy, Albania and Serbia, always exploring cultural treasures and history. He retired in 2014. He enjoyed learning about and drinking wine, together with fine food and preferably in the company of friends.



In Memoriam

Charles R. Meyer



Charles R. Meyer, 89, of Traverse City, Mich., died Nov. 7 in Greensboro, N.C., in the care of his family. A retired Foreign Service employee, he was a U.S. Army veteran and held a masters' degree from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. He served at U.S. posts in South Vietnam, Columbia, Panama, Honduras, Argentina and Spain. In retirement, he became a Traverse City Realtor and was active in his community as a member of his church, the American Legion, Old Mission Peninsula Historical Society and the American Foreign Service Association.



In Memoriam

Dennis L. Williams



Dennis L. Williams, 70, died Nov. 4 due to pneumonia. A native of Freeport, Ill., he served with the U.S. Army in Japan, then joined the Bureau of Diplomatic Security. He served in Japan, Jamaica and Cairo, where he was shot twice while protecting two colleagues, for which he received the Department's Award for Valor. He served as a Regional Security Officer overseas and, stateside, oversaw dignitary protection operation for the 1984 Olympics and the U.N. General Assembly. He came out of retirement to help deploy a network linking all embassies' physical security systems and then supervised the redesign of the DS central command center. He also taught security and risk management courses for the Department and other agencies, and American University. He and his wife traveled the world, especially Europe and the Caribbean, and enjoyed SCUBA diving and sailing.



End State



Trajan's Forum was the last of the Imperial fora to be constructed in ancient Rome.
Photo by Kamil Porembiński

